Class 270 S Book R547
General Theological Seminary Library
CHELSEA SQUARE, NEW YORK
v.1

PRESENTED BY
Soc'y for Promoting Religion and Learning

SKETCHES OF CHURCH HISTORY

BY THE REV. C. B. MOSS

THE BODY IS ONE. An Introduction to the Problem of Christian Unity. Paper, 2s. 6d.; cloth boards, 3s. 6d. net.

OLD CATHOLIC CHURCHES AND REUNION. 2s. net.

LONDON: S.P.C.K.

Map illustrating the
HISTORY OF THE CHURCH
during the First Six Centuries.
English Miles
0 100 200 400 600 800 2000
Reference.
1 Patriarchate of Constantinople
2 ..... d°..... Antioch
3 ..... d°..... Jerusalem
4 ..... d°..... Alexandria
Longitude East 0 10 20 of Greenwich 30 40
Black S.
Mediterranean Sea
Red Sea
SPAIN
FRANCE
ITALY
GERMANY
ILLYRICUM
THRACE
MACEDONIA
ATHENS
BITHYNIA
PONTUS
CAPPADOCIA
ASIA
PHRYGIA
CILICIA
ARMENIA
MESOPOTAMIA
SYRIA
ARABIA
EGYPT
LIBYA
MAURITANIA
NUMIDIA
AFRICA
Sicily
Corsica
Sardinia
CRETE
Cyprus
Rhodes
Mt Taurus
Euphrates
Tigris
Jordan
Alexandria
Carthage
Rome
Constantinople
Jerusalem
Antioch

SKETCHES OF CHURCH HISTORY

BY

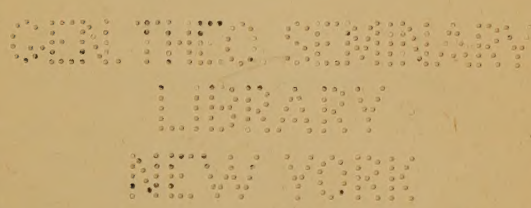
J. C. ROBERTSON, M.A.

CANON OF CANTERBURY

REVISED BY C. B. MOSS, M.A.

LATE SCHOLAR OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD

PART I.—FROM A.D. 29 TO A.D. 604



LONDON

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

NEW YORK AND TORONTO: THE MACMILLAN CO.

270S
R547
86121 v.1

First published 1878
New edition, revised, 1929

NEW YORK
LIBRARY
GENERAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Printed in Great Britain

CONTENTS

PART I

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Age of the Apostles	3
II.	St. Ignatius	9
III.	St. Polycarp	13
IV.	St. Justin, Martyr	15
V.	The Martyrs of Lyons and Vienne	19
VI.	Tertullian—Perpetua and her Companions	21
VII.	Origen	25
VIII.	St. Cyprian—Part I.	29
	,, Part II.	32
	,, Part III.	34
IX.	The Last Persecution	36
X.	Constantine the Great	43
XI.	The Council of Nicæa	50
XII.	St. Athanasius—Part I.	54
	,, Part II.	58
	,, Part III.	61
XIII.	The Monks	67
XIV.	St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nazianzus—Part I. ...	75
	,, ,, ,, Part II. ...	78
XV.	St. Ambrose	82
XVI.	The Temple of Serapis	87
XVII.	Church Government	90
XVIII.	Christian Worship—Part I.	95
	,, ,, Part II.	97
	,, ,, Part III.	101
XIX.	Arcadius and Honorius	103
XX.	St. John Chrysostom—Part I.	106
	,, ,, Part II.	111
	,, ,, Part III.	114
	,, ,, Part IV.	116

CHAPTER		PAGE
XXI.	St. Augustine—Part I.	119
	,, Part II.	122
	,, Part III. (Donatism)	126
	,, Part IV. ,, ...	130
	,, Part V. ,, ...	132
	,, Part VI. (Pelagianism)	136
	,, Part VII.	139
XXII.	Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon	141
XXIII.	Fall of the Western Empire	143
XXIV.	Conversion of the Barbarians—Christianity in Britain	146
XXV.	Scotland and Ireland	149
XXVI.	Clovis	153
XXVII.	Justinian	156
XXVIII.	Nestorians and Monophysites	158
XXIX.	St. Benedict—Part I.	161
	,, Part II.	164
XXX.	End of the Sixth Century—Part I.	166
	,, ,, Part II.	168
XXXI.	St. Gregory the Great—Part I.	170
	,, ,, Part II.	173
	,, ,, Part III.	175
	,, ,, Part IV.	177

TABLE OF DATES

PART I

A.D.		PAGE
29 (*about*).	Descent of the Holy Ghost on the Day of Pentecost	3
49 (*about*).	Council of Jerusalem permits Baptism of Gentiles	4
62 (*about*).	Martyrdom of St. James, the Lord's brother ...	5
64.	Persecution by Nero begins	5
68 (*about*).	Martyrdom of St. Peter and St. Paul	5
70.	Destruction of Jerusalem by Titus	5
95.	Persecution by Domitian	6
100 (*about*).	Death of St. John	8
116 (*about*).	Martyrdom of Ignatius	13
155.	Martyrdom of Polycarp	15
156 or 172.	Montanus publishes his heresy	21
166.	Martyrdom of Justin	19
177.	Persecution at Lyons and Vienne	19
190.	Tertullian flourishes	22
202.	Persecution by Severus begins	22
—	Martyrdom of Origen's father	25
203.	Martyrdom of Perpetua and her companions	22
248.	Cyprian, bishop of Carthage	29
249.	Persecution by Decius	28
251.	Paul, the first hermit	67
—	Troubles at Carthage—Novatian separates from the Church	32
254.	Death of Origen	29
—	Disagreement between Cyprian and Stephen, bishop of Rome	33
257.	Persecution by Valerian	34
258.	Martyrdom of Cyprian	36
260.	Conversion of the Goths begins	46
261.	Valerian taken prisoner in Persia—Gallienus allows liberty to the Christians	37
270.	Manes publishes his new religion	121
298.	Diocletian requires soldiers, etc., to worship the heathen gods	39
303.	The last general persecution begins	39
311.	Separation of the Donatists from the Church ...	50, 128
313.	End of the persecution—Constantine and Licinius give liberty to the Christians	43
314.	Council of Arles about the affairs of the Donatists ...	129

A.D.		PAGE
319.	Arius begins to publish his heresy	50
324.	Constantine defeats Licinius	44
325.	The First General Council held at Nicæa—Arius condemned	52
326.	Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria	54
335.	Council of Tyre	55
—	Athanasius banished to Treves	56
336.	Death of Arius	57
337.	Death of Constantine	58
338.	Athanasius restored to his see	60
341.	Second banishment of Athanasius	60
343.	Persecution in Persia	48
347.	Revolt, defeat, and banishment of the Donatists ...	130
348.	Ulfilas, bishop of the Goths	104
349.	Second return of Athanasius	60
356.	Third exile of Athanasius	60
—	Death of Antony the hermit	69
361.	Julian, emperor—Paganism restored	65
362.	The Donatists recalled	132
—	Athanasius restored, but again banished	64
—	Attempt to rebuild the Temple of Jerusalem	65
363.	Death of Julian	66
370.	Basil, bishop of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia	76
372.	Gregory of Nazianzus consecrated as bishop of Sasima ...	78
373.	Death of Athanasius	66
374.	Ambrose, bishop of Milan	82
378.	Gregory of Nazianzus goes to Constantinople	78
379.	Theodosius, emperor—Death of Basil	78–79
380.	Gregory of Nazianzus, bishop of Constantinople ...	79
381.	Second General Council held at Constantinople—Gregory withdraws from his see	80
385.	Execution of Priscillian	82
387.	Baptism of Augustine	125
—	Sedition at Antioch	107
390.	Massacre at Thessalonica, and repentance of Theodosius	85
391.	Destruction of the Temple of Serapis	88
395.	Death of Theodosius	86
—	Augustine, bishop of Hippo	126
397.	Death of Ambrose	86
—	Chrysostom, bishop of Constantinople	111
400.	Pelagius teaches his heresy at Rome	136
403.	Death of Telemachus at Rome	105
—	Council of the Oak—Chrysostom banished and recalled ...	116
404.	Chrysostom banished to Cucusus	117
407.	Death of Chrysostom	119
409.	The Romans withdraw from Britain	148
410.	Rome taken by Alaric	103
—	Pelagius and Celestius in Africa	138
411	Conference with the Donatists at Carthage	134

A.D.		PAGE
412.	Ninian, bishop of Whithorn	149
415.	Councils in the Holy Land as to Pelagius	138
429.	Pelagianism put down in Britain by German and Lupus	148
430.	Death of Augustine	141
431.	Third General Council held at Ephesus—Condemnation of Nestorius	142
432.	Death of Ninian—Patrick goes into Ireland	150
449.	Council, known as "The Meeting of Robbers," at Ephesus	142
451.	Fourth General Council held at Chalcedon—Condemnation of Eutyches	142
—	Attila in Gaul—Deliverance of Orleans	144
452.	Attila in Italy	145
455.	Rome plundered by Genseric	145
476.	End of the Western Empire	146
484-519.	Separation between the Churches of Rome and Constantinople	158
493.	Death of Patrick	151
496.	Conversion of Clovis	154
527.	Justinian, emperor	156
529.	The heathen schools of Athens shut up	156
—	Benedict draws up his Rule for monks	164
541.	Jacob, leader of the Monophysites	159
553.	Fifth General Council held at Constantinople	160
565.	Columba settles at Iona	152
—	Death of Justinian	156
589.	Third Council of Toledo—The Spanish Church renounces Arianism	147
—	Columbanus goes into France	152
590.	Gregory the Great, bishop of Rome	169
597.	Landing of Augustine in England — Conversion of Ethelbert	179
604.	Deaths of Gregory and Augustine	181
681.	Sixth General Council held at Constantinople	160

EXPLANATION OF THE MAP

(*To be read after Chapter XXII.*)

The Map is meant to give the names of such places only as are mentioned in the History.

The bounds of the patriarchates of Constantinople, Antioch, and Jerusalem are marked as they were settled at the Council of Chalcedon, in the year 451.

Only the northern part of the Alexandrian patriarchate is seen, as the Map does not reach far enough to take in Abyssinia, which belonged to it.

At the time of the Council of Nicæa (A.D. 325) the bishop of Rome's patriarchate was confined to the middle and the south of Italy, with the Islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica. It afterwards grew by degrees, until at length it took in all the countries of the west, although it had lost Illyricum, which was once a part of it. But this was not until long after the time to which our little book relates, and in the meanwhile its extent varied very much. The reason why its bounds, at the time of the Council of Chalcedon, or in the days of Gregory the Great, cannot well be marked in a map is, that in some countries the bishops of Rome had much *influence,* but had not *power*. They gave *advice* to the bishops of Gaul (or France), Spain, and Africa, and sometimes ventured to give them *directions*. But they could not make the bishops of these countries obey their directions, and had not *authority* over them in the same way as the patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, or Jerusalem had over the bishops within their patriarchates. To mark such countries as belonging to the Roman patriarchate would be too much; to mark them as if they had no connection with it would be too little.

PREFACE TO NEW EDITION

THE revision of a fifty years old book is a difficult task. The reviser may easily retain too much of bygone phraseology, and thereby spoil the value of the book he is editing; or he may alter too freely, and perhaps do an injury to the memory of the original writer. No one can do such work to the entire satisfaction of himself and his readers. In the present case, the publisher's reason for desiring a revision was the fact that the simplicity of the original book fitted it for a public not sufficiently provided for by other writers.

The method of revision has been dictated by practical needs. Manifest errors have been eliminated as far as possible; so have unduly controversial expressions. The ordinary phrases of Church life to-day, such as "the Eucharist," have been introduced. The most important of the entirely new passages will be found on pp. I., 4, 143, 150-152, 158-160; II., 1-3, 58, 68.

W. K. LOWTHER CLARKE,
Editorial Secretary, S.P.C.K.

CHAPTER I

THE AGE OF THE APOSTLES

(FROM A.D. 29 TO A.D. 100)

THE beginning of the Christian Church is reckoned from the great day on which the Holy Ghost came down, as our Lord had promised to His Apostles. At that time, "Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven," were gathered together at Jerusalem, to keep the Feast of Pentecost (or Feast of Weeks), which was one of the three holy seasons at which God required His people to appear before Him in the place which He had chosen (Deut. xvi. 16). Many of these devout men were converted, by what they then saw and heard, to believe the Gospel; and, when they returned to their own countries, they carried back with them the news of the wonderful things which had taken place at Jerusalem. After this, the Apostles went forth "into all the world," as their Master had ordered them, to "preach the Gospel to every creature" (St. Mark xvi. 15). The Acts of the Apostles tells us something of what they did, and we may learn something more about it from the Epistles. And, although this be but a small part of the whole, it will give us a notion of the rest, if we consider that, while St. Paul was preaching in Asia Minor, in Greece, and at Rome, the other Apostles were busily doing the same work in other countries.

We must remember, too, the constant coming and going which in those days took place throughout the world; how Jews from all quarters went up to keep the Passover and other feasts at Jerusalem; how the great Roman empire stretched from Britain to the frontiers of Persia and Ethiopia, and people

from all parts of it were continually going to Rome and returning. We must consider how merchants travelled from country to country on account of their trade; how soldiers were sent into all quarters of the empire, and were moved about from one country to another. And from these things we may get some understanding of the way in which the knowledge of the Gospel would be spread, when once it had taken root in the cities of Jerusalem and Rome. Thus it came to pass that, by the end of the first hundred years after our Saviour's birth, something was known of the Christian faith throughout all the Roman empire, and even in countries beyond it; and if in many cases, only a very little was known, still even that was a gain, and served as a preparation for more.

The first great question which had to be decided by the infant Church was the question whether Gentiles who wished to become Christians must be circumcized before they could be baptized. If no one could be a Christian without first becoming a Jew, the Christian Church could never be more than a Jewish sect. St. Paul was the first to see clearly that our Lord meant His Church to include all nations, and that to insist on converts becoming Jews as well as Christians would be fatal. In A.D. 49 a Council was held at Jerusalem to decide this question (Acts xv.). It was agreed that Gentile converts need not be circumcized, but must keep certain rules about food, so that they might be able to live with Jewish Christians who still kept the Law. But from this time the Jewish part of the Church grew weaker, and the Gentile part stronger, until the religion which had begun as a sect of Judaism ceased to have any Jewish members. Nevertheless the Church continued to claim to be the true heir of the promises made to Israel: the Jews, who had rejected the Messiah, had now ceased to be God's chosen people, and their place had been taken by the Christian Church.

The last chapter of the Acts leaves St. Paul at Rome, waiting for his trial on account of the things which the Jews had laid to his charge. We find from the Epistles to Timothy and Titus that he was afterwards set free, and returned to the East. There is reason to suppose that he also visited Spain, as he had said he would in his Epistle to the Romans (xv. 28). He was at last imprisoned again at Rome, where the Emperor Nero persecuted the Christians very cruelly in order to divert from himself the suspicion of having caused the fire of Rome; and it is believed that both St. Peter and St. Paul were put to death there in his reign. St. Peter was crucified head downwards, so it is said, but St. Paul, being a Roman citizen, who could not be crucified, was beheaded. The bishops of Rome afterwards set up claims to great power and honour, because they said that St. Peter was the first bishop of their church, and that they were his successors. But although we may reasonably believe that the Apostle was martyred at Rome, there does not appear to be any good ground for thinking that he had been settled there as bishop of the city.

All the Apostles, except St. John, are supposed to have been martyred (or put to death for the sake of the Gospel). St. James, one of the "brethren of the Lord" (probably a son of St. Joseph by a former wife), who was bishop of Jerusalem, was killed by the Jews in an uproar about the year 62. Soon after this, the Jews revolted against the Romans, destroyed a Roman army, and murdered the chief priests, including Ananias, the High Priest before whom St. Paul had been brought. The Romans sent their armies into Judaea; Titus, who afterwards became emperor, besieged and took Jerusalem, razed the Temple to the ground, crucified many thousand Jews, and sold the rest into slavery. Thus our Lord's prophecy was fulfilled. From that time the Jewish sacrifices ceased,

and the Jews have ever since been a nation without a country, practising a religion which has missed its way. The Christians of Palestine fled to Pella, beyond the Jordan, and took no part in the siege of Jerusalem, obeying our Lord's command to "flee to the mountains."

Thirty years after Nero's time another emperor, Domitian, raised a fresh persecution against the Christians because they refused to worship him as a god (A.D. 95). Among those who suffered were some of his own near relations; for the Gospel had now made its way among the great people of the earth, as well as among the poor, who were the first to listen to it. There is a story that the emperor was told that some persons of the family of David were living in the Holy Land, and that he sent for them, because he was afraid lest the Jews should set them up as princes, and should rebel against his government. They were two grandchildren of St. Jude, who was one of our Lord's kinsmen after the flesh, and therefore belonged to the house of David and the old kings of Judah. But these two were plain countrymen, who lived quietly and contentedly on their little farm, and were not likely to lead a rebellion, or to claim earthly kingdoms. And when they were carried before the emperor, they showed him their hands, which were rough and horny from working in the fields; and in answer to his questions about the kingdom of Christ, they said that it was not of this world, but spiritual and heavenly, and that it would appear at the end of the world, when the Saviour would come again to judge both the quick and the dead. So the emperor saw that there was nothing to fear from them, and he let them go.

It was during Domitian's persecution that St. John[1] was banished to the island of Patmos, where he saw

[1] It is not certain that the author of the "Revelation" is the same as St. John the Apostle.

the visions which are described in his "Revelation." All the other Apostles had been long dead, and St. John had lived many years at Ephesus, where he governed the churches of the country around. After his return from Patmos he went about to all these churches, that he might repair the hurt which they had suffered in the persecution. In one of the towns which he visited, he noticed a young man of very pleasing looks, and called him forward, and desired the bishop of the place to take care of him. The bishop did so, and, after having properly trained the youth, he baptized and confirmed him. But when this had been done, the bishop thought that he need not watch over him so carefully as before; and the young man fell into vicious company, and went on from bad to worse, until at length he became the head of a band of robbers, who kept the whole country in terror. When the Apostle next visited the town he asked after the charge which he had put into the bishop's hands. The bishop, with shame and grief, answered that the young man was dead, and, on being further questioned, he explained that he meant *dead in sins,* and told all the story. St. John, after having blamed him because he had not taken more care, asked where the robbers were to be found, and set off on horseback for their haunt, where he was seized by some of the band and carried before the captain. The young man, on seeing him, knew him at once, and could not bear his look, but ran away to hide himself. But the Apostle called him back, told him that there was yet hope for him through Christ, and spoke in such a moving way that the robber agreed to return to the town. There he was once more received into the Church as a penitent; and he spent the rest of his days in repentance for his sins and in thankfulness for the mercy which had been shown to him.

St. John, in his old age, was much troubled by false teachers, who had begun to corrupt the Gospel.

These persons are called *heretics*, and their doctrines are called *heresy*, from a Greek word which means to *choose*, because they *chose* to follow their own fancies instead of receiving the Gospel as the Apostles and the Church taught it. Simon the sorcerer, who is mentioned in the eighth chapter of the Acts, is counted as the first heretic, and even in the time of the Apostles a number of others arose, such as Hymenæus, Philetus, and Alexander, who are mentioned by St. Paul (1 Tim. i. 19, 20; 2 Tim. ii. 17, 18). These earliest heretics were mostly of the kind called *Gnostics*—a word which means that they pretended to be more *knowing* than ordinary Christians; and perhaps St. Paul may have meant them especially when he warned Timothy against "science" (or *knowledge*) "falsely so called" (1 Tim. vi. 20). Their doctrines were a strange mixture of Jewish and heathen notions with Christianity; and it is curious that some of the very strangest of their opinions have been brought up again from time to time by people who fancied that they had found out something new, while they had only fallen into old errors, which had been condemned by the Church hundreds of years before. Nowadays people who try to reintroduce the foolish beliefs of the Gnostics are called Theosophists.

St. John lived to about the age of a hundred. He was at last so weak that he could not walk into the church; so he was carried in, and used to say continually to his people: "Little children, love one another." Some of them, after a time, began to be tired of hearing this, and asked him why he repeated the words so often, and said nothing else to them. The Apostle answered: "Because it is the Lord's commandment, and if this be done it is enough."

CHAPTER II

ST. IGNATIUS

(ABOUT A.D. 116)

WHEN our Lord ascended into Heaven, He left the government of His Church to the Apostles. We are told that during the forty days between His rising from the grave and His ascension, He gave commandments unto the Apostles, and spoke of the things pertaining (or *belonging*) to the kingdom of God (Acts i. 2, 3). Thus they knew what they were to do when their Master should be no longer visibly with them; and one of the first things which they did, even without waiting until His promise of sending the Holy Ghost should be fulfilled, was to choose St. Matthias for the place which had been left empty by the fall of the traitor Judas (Acts i. 15-26).

After this we find that they appointed other persons to help them in their work. First, they appointed the *deacons*, to take care of the poor and to assist in other services. Then they appointed *presbyters* (or *elders*), to undertake the charge of congregations. Afterwards, we find St. Paul sending Timothy to Ephesus, and Titus into the island of Crete, with power to "ordain elders in every city" (Titus i. 5), and to govern all the churches within a large country.[1] Thus, then, three kinds (or *orders*) of ministers of the Church are mentioned in the Acts and Epistles. The *deacons* are lowest; the *presbyters*, or *elders* are next; and, above these, there is a higher order, made up of the Apostles themselves, with such persons as Timothy and Titus, who had to look after a great number of presbyters and deacons, and were also the

[1] In the New Testament we find the word "Church" used in two senses: the "Church" is the whole Christian society; the "churches" are the local groups in different cities. The modern use of the word to mean religious societies differing from one another in faith and government was unknown in ancient times.

chief spiritual pastors (or *shepherds*) of the people who were under the care of these presbyters and deacons. In the New Testament, the name of *bishops* (which means *overseers*) is sometimes given to the Apostles and other clergy of the highest order, and sometimes to the presbyters; but after a time it was given only to the highest order, and when the Apostles were dead, the *bishops* had the chief government of the Church. It has since been found convenient that some bishops should be placed above others, and should be called by higher titles, such as *archbishops* and *patriarchs;* but these all belong to the same *order* of bishops; just as in a parish, although the rector and the curate have different titles, and one of them is above the other, they are both most commonly presbyters (or, as we now say, *priests*), and so they both belong to the same *order* in the ministry.

One of the most famous among the early bishops was St. Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, the place where the disciples were first called Christians (Acts xi. 26). Antioch was the chief city of Syria, and was so large that it had more than two hundred thousand inhabitants. St. Peter himself is said to have been its bishop for some years; and, although this is possibly a mistake, it is worth remembering, because we shall find by-and-by that much was said about the bishops of Antioch being St. Peter's successors, as well as the bishops of Rome.

Ignatius had governed his church for forty years or more when the Emperor Trajan came to Antioch. In Roman history, Trajan is described as one of the best among the emperors; but he did not treat the Christians well. He seems never to have thought that the Gospel could possibly be true, and thus he did not take the trouble to inquire what the Christians really believed or did. They were obliged in those days to hold their worship in secret, and mostly by night, or very early in the morning, because it would

not have been safe to meet openly; and hence, the heathen, who did not know what was done at their meetings, were tempted to fancy all manner of dreadful things, such as that the Christians practised magic; that they worshipped the head of an ass; that they offered children in sacrifice; and that they ate human flesh! It is not likely that the Emperor Trajan believed such foolish tales as these; and, when he did make some inquiry about the ways of the Christians, he heard nothing but what was good of them. But still he might think that there was some mischief behind, and he might fear lest the secret meetings of the Christians should have something to do with plots against his government.

When Trajan came to Antioch, St. Ignatius was carried before him. The emperor asked what evil spirit possessed him, so that he not only broke the laws by refusing to serve the gods of Rome, but persuaded others to do the same. Ignatius answered, that he was not possessed by any evil spirit; that he was a servant of Christ; that by His help he defeated the malice of evil spirits; and that he bore his God and Saviour within his heart. After some more questions and answers, the emperor ordered that he should be carried in chains to Rome, and there should be devoured by wild beasts. When Ignatius heard this terrible sentence, he was so far from being frightened that he burst forth into thankfulness and rejoicing, because he was allowed to suffer for his Saviour, and for the deliverance of his people.

It was a long and toilsome journey, over land and sea, from Antioch to Rome; and an old man, such as Ignatius, was ill able to bear it, especially as winter was coming on. He was to be chained, too, and the soldiers who had the charge of him behaved very rudely and cruelly to him. And no doubt the emperor thought that, by sending so venerable a bishop in this way to suffer so fearful and so disgraceful a death (to

which only the very lowest wretches were usually sentenced), he would terrify other Christians into forsaking their faith. But instead of this, the courage and the patience with which St. Ignatius bore his sufferings gave the Christians fresh spirit to endure whatever might come upon them.

The news that the holy bishop of Antioch was to be carried to Rome soon spread, and at many places on the way the bishops, clergy, and people flocked together, that they might see him, and pray and talk with him, and receive his blessing. And when he could find time, he wrote letters to various churches, exhorting them to stand fast in the faith, to be at peace among themselves, to obey the bishops who were set over them, and to advance in all holy living. One of the letters was written to the Church at Rome, and was sent on by some persons who were travelling by a shorter way. St. Ignatius begs, in this letter, that the Romans will not try to save him from death. "I am the wheat of God," he says, "let me be ground by the teeth of beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ. Rather do ye encourage the beasts, that they may become my tomb, and may leave nothing of my body, so that, when dead, I may not be troublesome to anyone." He even says that if the lions should hang back he will himself provoke them to attack him. It would not be right for ordinary people to speak in this way, and the Church has always disapproved of those who threw themselves in the way of persecution. But a holy man, who had served God for so many years as Ignatius, might well speak in a way which would not become ordinary Christians. When he was called to die for his people and for the truth of Christ, he might even take it as a token of God's favour, and might long for his deliverance from the troubles and the trials of this world, as St. Paul said of himself, that he "had a desire to depart, and to be with Christ" (Phil. i. 23).

He reached Rome just in time for some games which were to take place in December; for the Romans were cruel enough to amuse themselves with setting wild beasts to tear and devour men, in vast places called *amphitheatres,* at their public games. When the Christians of Rome heard that Ignatius was near the city, great numbers of them went out to meet him, and they said that they would try to persuade the people in the amphitheatre to beg that he might not be put to death. But he entreated, as he had before done in his letter, that they would do nothing to hinder him from glorifying God by his death; and he knelt down with them, and prayed that they might continue in faith and love, and that the persecution might soon come to an end. As it was the last day of the games, and they were nearly over, he was then hurried into the amphitheatre (called the *Coliseum*), which was so large that tens of thousands of people might look on. And in this place (of which the ruins are still to be seen) St. Ignatius was torn to pieces and devoured by wild beasts, so that only a few of his larger bones were left, which the Christians took up and conveyed to his own city of Antioch.

CHAPTER III

ST. POLYCARP

(A.D. 155)

About forty years after St. Ignatius, St. Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna, was put to death. He was a very old man; for it was almost ninety years since he had been converted from heathenism. He had known St. John, and is supposed to have been made bishop of Smyrna by that Apostle himself; and he had been a friend of St. Ignatius. Because of his wise and holy character, he was honoured as a father by the whole

Church, and his advice had sometimes put an end to differences of opinion which but for him might have turned into lasting quarrels.

When the persecution reached Smyrna a number of Christians suffered with great constancy, and the heathen multitude, being provoked at their refusal to give up their faith, cried out for the death of Polycarp. The aged bishop, although he was ready to die for his Saviour, remembered that it was not right to throw himself in the way of danger, so he left the city, and went first to one village in the neighbourhood and then to another. But he was discovered in his hiding-place, and when he saw the soldiers who were come to seize him, he calmly said: "God's will be done!" He desired that some food should be given to them, and, while they were eating, he spent the time in prayer. He was then set on an ass and led towards Smyrna, and when he was near the town, one of the heathen magistrates came by in his chariot and took him up into it. The magistrate tried to persuade Polycarp to sacrifice to the gods, but finding that he could make nothing of him, he pushed him out of the chariot so roughly that the old man fell and broke his leg. But Polycarp bore the pain without showing how much he was hurt, and the soldiers led him into the amphitheatre, where great numbers of people were gathered together. When all these saw him, they set up loud cries of rage and savage delight; but Polycarp thought, as he entered the place, that he heard a voice saying to him: "Be strong and play the man!" and he did not heed all the shouting of the crowd. The governor desired him to deny Christ, and said that, if he would, his life should be spared. But the faithful bishop answered: "Eighty and six years have I served Christ, and He has never done me wrong; how then can I now blaspheme my King and Saviour?" The governor again and again urged him, as if in a friendly way, to sacrifice; but Polycarp steadfastly

refused. He next threatened to let wild beasts loose on him; and as Polycarp still showed no fear, he said that he would burn him alive. "You threaten me," said the bishop, "with a fire which lasts but a short time; but you know not of that eternal fire which is prepared for the wicked." A stake was then set up, and a pile of wood was collected around it. Polycarp walked to the place with a calm and cheerful look, and, as the executioners were going to fasten him to the stake with iron clamps, he begged them to spare themselves the trouble: "He who gives me the strength to bear the flames," he said, "will enable me to remain steady." He was therefore only tied to the stake with cords, and as he stood thus bound, he uttered a thanksgiving for being allowed to suffer after the pattern of his Lord and Saviour. When his prayer was ended, the wood was set on fire, but we are told that the flames swept round him, looking like the sail of a ship swollen by the wind, while he remained unhurt in the midst of them. One of the executioners, seeing this, plunged a sword into the martyr's breast, and the blood rushed forth in such a stream that it put out the fire. But the persecutors, who were resolved that the Christians should not have their bishop's body, lighted the wood again and burnt the corpse, so that only a few of the bones remained, and these the Christians gathered out, and gave them an honourable burial. It was on Easter eve that St. Polycarp suffered, in the year of our Lord 155.

CHAPTER IV

ST. JUSTIN, MARTYR

(A.D. 166)

ALTHOUGH Trajan was no friend to the Gospel, and put St. Ignatius to death, he gave an order which must

have been a great relief to the Christians. Until then, they were liable to be sought out, and anyone might inform against them; but Trajan ordered that they should not be sought out, although, if they were discovered, and refused to give up their faith, they were to be punished. The next emperor, too, whose name was Hadrian (A.D. 117 to 138), did something to make their condition better; but it was still one of great hardship and danger. Notwithstanding the new laws, any governor of a country, who disliked the Christians, had the power to persecute and vex them cruelly. And the common people among the heathen still believed the horrid stories of their killing children and eating human flesh. If there was a famine or a plague —if the river Tiber, which runs through Rome, rose above its usual height and did mischief to the neighbouring buildings—or if the emperor's armies were defeated in war, the blame was laid on the Christians. It was said that all these things were judgments from the gods, who were angry because the Christians were allowed to live. And then at the public games, such as those at which St. Ignatius was put to death, the people used to cry out: "Throw the Christians to the lions! away with the godless wretches!" For, as the Christians were obliged to hold their worship secretly, and had no images like those of the heathen gods, and did not offer any sacrifices of beasts, as the heathen did, it was thought that they had no God at all, since the heathen could not raise their minds to the thought of that God who is a spirit, and who is not to be worshipped under any bodily shape. It was, therefore, a great relief when the Emperor Antoninus Pius (A.D. 138 to 161), who was a mild and gentle old man, ordered that governors and magistrates should not give way to such outcries, and that the Christians should only be punished after a formal charge and a proper trial.

There were now many learned men in the Church,

and some of these began to write books in defence of their faith. One of them, Athenagoras, had undertaken, while he was a heathen, to show that the Gospel was all a deceit; but when he looked further into the matter, he found that it was very different from what he had fancied; and then he was converted, and, instead of writing against the Gospel, he wrote in favour of it.

Another of these learned men was Justin, who was born at Samaria, and was trained in all the wisdom of the Greeks. For the Greeks, as they were left without such light as God had given to the Jews, had set themselves to seek out wisdom in all sorts of ways. And, as they had no certain truth from heaven to guide them, they were divided into a number of different parties or "schools," such as the Epicureans and the Stoics, who disputed with St. Paul at Athens (Acts xvii. 18). These all called themselves *philosophers* (which means, *lovers of wisdom*); and each school thought itself wiser than all the rest. Justin, then, having a strong desire to know the truth, tried one kind of philosophy after another, but could not find rest for his spirit in any of them.

One day, as he was walking thoughtfully on the sea-shore, he observed an old man of grave and gentle appearance, who was following him closely, and at length entered into conversation with him. The old man told Justin that it was of no use to search after wisdom in the books of the philosophers; and went on to speak of God the maker of all things, of the prophecies which He had given to men in the Old Testament, and how they had been fulfilled in the life and death of the blessed Jesus. Thus Justin was brought to the knowledge of the Gospel; and the more he learnt of it, the more was he convinced of its truth, as he came to know how pure and holy its doctrines and its rules were, and as he saw the love which Christians bore towards each other, and the patience

and firmness with which they endured sufferings and death for their Master's sake. And now, although he still called himself a philosopher, and wore the long cloak which was the common dress of philosophers, the wisdom which he taught was not heathen but Christian wisdom. He lived mostly at Rome, where scholars flocked to him in great numbers. And he wrote books in defence of the Gospel against heathens, Jews, and heretics, or false Christians.

The old Emperor Antoninus Pius died in the year 161, and was succeeded by Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, whom he had adopted as his son. Marcus Aurelius was in many ways one of the best of all the heathen. He had a great character for gentleness, kindness, and justice, and he was fond of books, and liked to have philosophers and learned men about him. But, unhappily, these people despised and hated Christianity; and, as he knew no more of it than what they told him, he took a strong dislike to it. And thus, although he was just and kind to his other subjects, the Christians suffered more under his reign than they had ever done before. All the misfortunes that took place, such as rebellions, defeats in war, plague, and scarcity, were laid to the blame of the Christians; and the emperor himself seems to have thought that they were in fault, as he made some new laws against them.

Now the success which Justin had as a teacher at Rome had long raised the envy and malice of the heathen philosophers, especially one Crescens, a philopher of the kind called *Cynics* or *doggish* (on account of their snarling, currish ways). Justin was carried before a judge, on the charge of being a Christian. The judge questioned him as to his belief, and as to the meetings of the Christians; to which Justin answered that he believed in one God, and in the Saviour Christ, the Son of God, but he refused to say anything which could betray his brethren to the

persecutors. The judge then threatened him with scourging and death, but Justin replied that the sufferings of this world were nothing to the glory which Christ had promised to His people in the world to come. Then he and the others who had been brought up for trial with him were asked whether they would offer sacrifice to the gods of the heathen, and as they refused to do this, and to forsake their faith, they were all beheaded (A.D. 166). And on account of the death which he thus suffered for the Gospel, Justin has ever since been especially styled "The Martyr."

CHAPTER V

THE MARTYRS OF LYONS AND VIENNE

(A.D. 177)

MANY other martyrs suffered in various parts of the empire under the reign of Marcus Aurelius. Among the most famous of these are the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne, in the south of France (or *Gaul*, as it was then called), where a company of missionaries from Asia Minor had settled with a bishop named Pothinus at their head. The persecution at Lyons and Vienne was begun by the mob of those towns, who insulted the Christians in the streets, broke into their houses, and committed other such outrages against them. Then a great number of Christians were seized and imprisoned in dungeons, where many died from want of food or from the bad and unwholesome air. The bishop, Pothinus, who was ninety years of age, and had long been very ill, was carried before the governor, and was asked: "Who is the God of Christians?" Pothinus saw that the governor did not put this question from any good feeling, so he answered: "If thou art worthy, thou shalt know." The bishop, old and feeble as he was, was then

dragged about by soldiers, and such of the mob as could reach him gave him blows and kicks, while others, who were further off, threw at him anything which came to hand; and, after this cruel usage, he was put into prison, where he died within two days.

The other prisoners were tortured for six days together in a variety of horrible ways. Their limbs were stretched on the rack, they were cruelly scourged, some had hot plates of iron applied to them, and some were made to sit in a red-hot iron chair. The firmness with which they bore these dreadful trials gave courage to some of their brethren, who at first had agreed to sacrifice, so that these now again declared themselves Christians, and joined the others in suffering. As all the tortures were of no effect, the prisoners were at length put to death. Some were thrown to wild beasts, but those who were citizens of Rome were beheaded, for it was not lawful to give a Roman citizen up to wild beasts, just as we know from St. Paul's case at Philippi that it was not lawful to scourge a citizen (Acts xvi. 37).

Among the martyrs was a boy named Ponticus, only fifteen years old, who was taken every day to see the tortures of the rest, in the hope that he might be frightened into denying his Saviour; but he was not shaken by the terrible sights, and for his constancy he was cruelly put to death on the last day. The greatest cruelties of all, however, were borne by a girl named Blandina. She was slave to a Christian lady; and, although the Christians regarded their slaves with a kindness very unlike the usual feeling of heathen masters towards them, this lady seems yet to have thought that a slave was not likely to endure tortures so courageously as a free person; and she was the more afraid because Blandina was not strong in body. But the poor slave's faith was not to be overcome. Day after day she bravely bore every cruelty that the persecutors could think of; and all

that they could wring out from her was: "I am a Christian, and nothing wrong is done among us!"

The heathen were not content with putting the martyrs to death with tortures, or allowing them to die in prison. They cast their dead bodies to the dogs and caused them to be watched day and night lest the other Christians should give them burial; and after this, they burnt the bones, and threw the ashes of them into the river Rhone, by way of mocking at the notion of a resurrection. For, as St. Paul had found at Athens (Acts xvii. 32), and elsewhere, there was no part of the Gospel which the heathen in general found so hard to believe as the doctrine that that which is "sown in corruption" shall hereafter be "raised in incorruption"; that that which "is sown a natural body" will one day be "raised a spiritual body" (1 Cor. xv. 42-44).

CHAPTER VI

TERTULLIAN—PERPETUA AND HER COMPANIONS

(A.D. 181–203)

THE Emperor Marcus Aurelius died in 181, and the Church was little troubled by persecution for the following twenty years.

About this time a false teacher named Montanus made much noise in the world. He was born in Phrygia, and seems to have been crazed in his mind. He used to fall into fits, and while in them, he uttered ravings which were taken for prophecies, or messages from heaven: and some women who followed him also pretended to be prophetesses. These people taught a very strict way of living, and thus many persons who wished to lead holy lives were deceived into running after them. One of these was Tertullian,

of Carthage, in Africa, a very clever and learned man, who had been converted from heathenism and had written some books in defence of the Gospel. But he was of a proud and impatient temper, and did not rightly consider how our Lord Himself had said that there would always be a mixture of evil with the good in His Church on earth (St. Matt. xiii. 38, 48). And hence, when Montanus pretended to set up a new Church, in which there should be none but good and holy people, Tertullian fell into the snare, and left the true Church to join the Montanists (as the followers of Montanus were called). From that time he wrote very bitterly against the Church, but he still continued to defend the Gospel in his books against Jews and heathens, and all kinds of false teachers, except Montanus. And when he was dead, his good deeds were remembered more than his fall, so that, with all his faults, his name has always been held in honour.

After more than twenty years of peace, there were cruel persecutions in some places, in the reign of Severus. The most famous of the martyrs who then suffered were Perpetua and her companions, who belonged to the same country with Tertullian, and perhaps to his own city, Carthage. Perpetua was a young married woman, and had a little baby only a few weeks old. Her father was a heathen, but she herself had been converted, and was a *catechumen*—which was the name given to converts who had not yet been baptized, but were being *catechised* to prepare them for baptism. When Perpetua had been put into prison, her father went to see her, in the hope that he might persuade her to give up her faith. "Father," she said, "You see this vessel standing here; can you call it by any other than its right name?" He answered, "No." "Neither," said Perpetua, "can I call myself anything else than what I am—a Christian." On hearing this, her father flew at her in such anger that it seemed

as if he would tear out her eyes; but she stood so quietly that he could not bring himself to hurt her; and he went away and did not come again for some time.

Meanwhile Perpetua and some of her companions were baptized, and at her baptism she prayed for grace to bear whatever sufferings might be in store for her. The prison in which she and the others were shut up was a horrible dungeon, where Perpetua suffered much from the darkness, the crowded state of the place, the heat and closeness of the air, and the rude behaviour of the guards. But most of all she was distressed about her poor little child, who was separated from her, and was pining away. Some Christians, however, gave money to the keepers of the prison, and got leave for Perpetua and her friends to spend some hours of the day in a lighter part of the building, where her child was brought to see her. And after a while she took him to be always with her, and then she felt as cheerful as if she had been in a palace.

The martyrs were comforted by dreams, which served to give them courage and strength to bear their sufferings, by showing them visions of blessedness which was to follow. When the day was fixed for their trial, Perpetua's father went again to see her. He begged her to take pity on his old age, to remember all his kindness to her, and how he had loved her best of all his children. He implored her to think of her mother and her brothers, and of the disgrace which would fall on all the family if she were to be put to death as an evil-doer. The poor old man shed a flood of tears; he humbled himself before her, kissing her hands, throwing himself at her feet, and calling her *Lady* instead of *Daughter*. But, although Perpetua was grieved to the heart, she could only say: "God's pleasure will be done on us. We are not in our own power, but in His!"

One day, as the prisoners were at dinner, they were suddenly hurried off to their trial. The market-place, where the judge was sitting, was crowded with people, and when Perpetua was brought forward, her father crept as close to her as he could, holding out her child, and said: "Take pity on your infant." The judge himself entreated her to pity the little one and the old man, and to sacrifice; but, painful as the trial was, she steadily declared that she was a Christian, and that she could not worship false gods. At these words her father burst out into such loud cries that the judge ordered him to be put down from the place where he was standing and to be beaten with rods. Perhaps the judge did not mean so much to punish the old man for being noisy as to try whether the sight of his suffering might not move his daughter; but, although Perpetua felt every blow as if it had been laid upon herself, she knew that she must not give way. She was condemned, with her companions, to be exposed to wild beasts; and after she had been taken back to prison, her father visited her once more. He seemed as if beside himself with grief; he tore his white beard, he cursed his old age, and spoke in a way that might have moved a heart of stone. But still Perpetua could only be sorry for him; she could not give up her Saviour.

The prisoners were kept for some time after their condemnation, that they might be put to death at some great games which were to be held on the birthday of one of the emperor's sons; and during this confinement their behaviour had a great effect on many who saw it. The gaoler himself was converted by it, and so were others who had gone to gaze at them. At length the appointed day came, and the martyrs were led into the amphitheatre. The men were torn by leopards and bears; Perpetua and a young woman named Felicitas, who was a slave, were put into nets and thrown before a furious cow, who tossed

them and gored them cruelly : and when this was over Perpetua seemed as if she had not felt it, but were awakening from a trance, and she asked when the cow was to come. She then helped Felicitas to rise from the ground, and spoke words of comfort and encouragement to others. When the people in the amphitheatre had seen as much as they wished of the wild beasts, they called out that the prisoners should be killed. Perpetua and the rest then took leave of each other, and walked with cheerful looks and firm steps into the middle of the amphitheatre, where men with swords fell on them and dispatched them. The executioner who was to kill Perpetua was a youth, and was so nervous that he stabbed her in a place where the hurt was not deadly, but she herself took hold of his sword and showed him where to give her the death-wound. St. Perpetua and her companions are commemorated in the kalendar on March 7. Their martyrdom took place in 203.

CHAPTER VII

ORIGEN

(A.D. 185–254)

THE same persecution in which Perpetua and her companions suffered at Carthage raged also at Alexandria in Egypt, where a learned man named Leonides was one of the martyrs (A.D. 202). Leonides had a son named Origen, whom he had brought up very carefully, and had taught to learn some part of the Bible by heart every day. And Origen was very eager to learn, and was so good and clever that his father was afraid to show how fond and how proud he was of him lest the boy should become forward and conceited. So when Origen asked questions of a kind which few boys would have thought of asking,

his father used to check him; but when he was asleep Leonides would steal to his bedside and kiss him, thanking God for having given him such a child, and praying that Origen might always be kept in the right way.

When the persecution began, Origen, who was then about seventeen years old, wished that he might be allowed to die for his faith, but his mother hid his clothes and so obliged him to stay at home, and all that he could do was to write to his father in prison and to beg that he would not fear lest the widow and orphans should be left destitute, but would be steadfast in his faith, and would trust in God to provide for their relief.

The persecutors were not content with killing Leonides, but seized all his property, so that the widow was left in great distress, with seven children, of whom Origen was the eldest. A Christian lady kindly took Origen into her house, and after a time, young as he was, he was made master of the *Catechetical School,* a sort of college, where the young Christians of Alexandria were instructed in religion and learning. The persecution had slackened for a while, but it began again, and some of Origen's pupils were martyred. He went with them to their trial, and stood by them in their sufferings; but although he was ill-used by the mob of Alexandria, he was himself allowed to go free.

Origen had read in the Gospel: "Freely ye have received, freely give" (St. Matt. x. 8), and he thought that for this reason he ought to teach for nothing. In order that he might be able to do this, he sold a quantity of books which he had written out, and lived for a long time on the price of them, allowing himself only about fivepence a day. His food was of the poorest kind; he had but one coat, through which he felt the cold of winter severely; he sat up the greater part of the night, and then lay down on the bare floor.

When he grew older, he came to understand that he had been mistaken in some of his notions as to these things, and to regret that, by treating himself so hardly, he had hurt his health beyond repair. But still, mistaken as he was, we must honour him for going through so bravely with what he took to be his duty.

He soon grew so famous as a teacher that even Jews, heathen, and heretics went to hear him, and many of them were so led on by him that they were converted to the Gospel. He travelled a great deal: some of his journeys were taken because he had been invited into other countries that he might teach the Gospel to people who were desirous of instruction in it, or that he might settle disputes about religion. And he was invited to go on a visit to the mother of the Emperor Alexander Severus, who was himself friendly to Christianity, although not a Christian. Origen, too, wrote a great number of books in explanation of the Bible, and on other religious subjects, and he worked for no less than eight-and-twenty years at a great book, called the *Hexapla,* which was meant to show how the Old Testament ought to be read in Hebrew and in Greek.

But, although he was a very good, as well as a very learned man, Origen fell into some strange opinions, from wishing to clear away some of those difficulties which, as St. Paul says, made the Gospel seem "foolishness" to the heathen philosophers (1 Cor. i. 23). Besides this, Demetrius, the bishop of Alexandria, although he had been his friend, had some reasons for not wishing to ordain him; and when Origen was ordained a presbyter (or priest) in the Holy Land, where he was on a visit, Demetrius was very angry. He said that no man ought to be ordained in any church but that of his own home, and he brought up stories about some rash things which Origen had done in his youth, and questions about the strange doctrines which he held. Origen, finding

that he could not hope for peace at Alexandria, went back to his friend the bishop of Cæsarea, where he was more sought after as a teacher than ever. At one time he was driven into Cappadocia, by the persecution of a savage emperor named Maximin, who had murdered the gentle Alexander Severus, but he returned to Cæsarea, and lived there until another persecution began under the Emperor Decius.

This was by far the worst persecution that had yet been known. It was the first which was carried on throughout the whole empire, and no regard was now paid to the old laws which Trajan and other emperors had made for the protection of the Christians. They were sought out, and were made to appear in the market-place of every town, where they were required by the magistrates to sacrifice, and, if they refused, were sentenced to severe punishment. The emperor wished most to strike at the bishops and clergy, for he thought that, if the teachers were put out of the way, the people would soon give up the Gospel. Although many martyrs were put to death at this time, the persecutors did not so much wish to kill the Christians as to make them disown their religion, and, in the hope of this, many of them were starved and tortured, and sent into banishment in strange countries, among wild people who had never before heard of Christ. But here the emperor's plans were notably disappointed, for the banished bishops and clergy had thus an opportunity of making the Gospel known to those wild tribes, whom it might not have reached for a long time if the Church had been left in quiet.

We shall hear more about the persecution in the next chapter. Here it is enough to say that Origen was imprisoned and cruelly tortured. He was by this time nearly seventy years old, and was weak in body from the labours which he had gone through in study and from having hurt his health by hard and scanty living in his youth, so that he was ill able to bear the

pains of the torture, and, although he did not die under it, he died of its effects soon after (A.D. 254), and was buried at Tyre. Origen was the greatest of Christian theologians between the Apostles and St. Augustine. But for various reasons he has never been canonized.

Decius himself was killed in battle (A.D. 251), and his persecution came to an end. And when it was over, the faithful understood that it had been of great use, not only by helping to spread the Gospel in the way which has been mentioned, but in purifying the Church, and in rousing Christians from the carelessness into which too many of them had fallen during the long time of ease and quiet which they had before enjoyed. For the trials which God sends on His people in this world are the chastisements of a loving Father; and, if we accept them rightly, they will all be found to turn out to our good.

CHAPTER VIII

ST. CYPRIAN

(A.D. 200–258)

PART I

ABOUT the same time with Origen lived St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage. He was born about the year 200, and had been long famous as a professor of heathen learning, when he was converted at the age of forty-five. He then gave up his calling as a teacher, and, like the first Christians at Jerusalem (Acts iv. 34-35), he sold a fine house and gardens, which he had near the town, and gave the price, with a large part of his other money, to the poor. He became one of the clergy of Carthage, and when the bishop died, about

three years after, Cyprian was so much loved and respected that he was chosen in his place (A.D. 248).

Cyprian tried with all his power to do the duties of a good bishop, and to get rid of many wrong things which had grown upon the Church during the long peace which it had enjoyed. But about two years after he was made bishop the persecution under Decius broke out, when, as was said in the last chapter, the persecutors tried especially to strike at the bishops and clergy and to force them to deny their faith. Now Cyprian would have been ready and glad to die if it would have served the good of his people, but he remembered how our Lord had said: "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another" (St. Matt. x. 23), and how He Himself withdrew from the rage of His enemies, because His "hour was not yet come" (St. John viii. 20, 59; xi. 54). And it seemed to the good bishop that for the present it would be best to go out of the way of the persecutors. But he kept a constant watch over all that was done in his church, and he often wrote to his clergy and people from the place where he was hidden.

But meanwhile things went on badly at Carthage. Many had called themselves Christians in the late quiet times who would not have done so if there had been any danger about it. And now, when the danger came, numbers of them ran into the market-place at Carthage, and seemed quite eager to offer sacrifice to the gods of the heathen. Others, who did not sacrifice, bribed some officers of the Government to give them tickets, certifying that they *had* sacrificed; and yet they contrived to persuade themselves that they had done nothing wrong by their cowardice and deceit! There were, too, some mischievous men among the clergy who had not wished Cyprian to be bishop, and had borne him a grudge ever since he was chosen. And now they set on the people who had *lapsed* (or

fallen) in the persecution, to demand that they should be taken back into the Church, and to say that some martyrs had given them letters which entitled them to be admitted at once.

In those days it was usual, when any Christian was known to have been guilty of a heavy sin, that he should be "put to open *penance*" by the Church—that is, that he should be required to show his repentance publicly. Persons who were in this state were not allowed to receive the Blessed Sacrament every Sunday, as all other Christians then did. The worst sinners were obliged to stand outside the church door, where they begged those who were going in to pray that their sins might be forgiven; and those of the penitents who were let into the church had places in it separate from other Christians. Sometimes penance lasted for years; and always until the penitents had done enough to prove that they were truly sorry for their sins, so that the clergy might hope that they were received to God's mercy for their Redeemer's sake. But as it was counted a great and glorious thing to die for the truth of Christ, and martyrs were highly honoured in the Church, penitents had been in the habit of going to them while they were in prison awaiting death, and of entreating the martyrs to plead with the Church for the shortening of the appointed penance. And it had been usual, out of regard for the holy martyrs, to forgive those to whom they had given letters desiring that the penitents might be gently treated. But now these people at Carthage, instead of showing themselves humble, as true penitents would have been, came forward in an insolent manner, as if they had a right to claim that they might be restored to the Church; and the martyrs' letters (or rather what they *called* martyrs' letters) were used in a way very different from anything that had ever been allowed. Cyprian had a great deal of trouble with them; but he dealt wisely in the

matter, and at length had the comfort of settling it. But, as people are always ready to find fault in one way or another, some blamed him for being too strict with the *lapsed*, and others for being too easy; the former ultimately threw in their lot with the latter and set up rival bishops to those of the Church. After a time, however, he got the better of these enemies, although the straiter sect (who were called *Novatianists*, after Novatian, a priest of Rome) lasted for three hundred years or more.

Part II

Shortly after the end of the persecution, a terrible plague passed through the empire, and carried off vast numbers of people. Many of the heathen thought that the plague was sent by their gods to punish them for allowing the Christians to live; and in the towns mobs broke out against the Christians, killing some of them, and hurting them in other ways.

But instead of returning evil for evil, the Christians showed what a spirit of love they had learnt from their Lord and Master; and there was no place where this was more remarkably shown than at Carthage. The heathen there were so much terrified by the plague that they seemed to have lost all natural feeling, and almost to be out of their senses. When their friends fell sick, they left them to die without any care; when they were dead, they cast out their bodies into the street; and the corpses which lay about unburied made the air unwholesome, so that there was much more danger of the plague than before. But while the heathen were acting in this way, and each of them thought only of himself, Cyprian called the Christians of Carthage together, and told them that *they* were bound to do very differently. "It would be no wonder," he said, "if we were to attend to our own friends; but Christ our Lord charges us to do good to heathen and publicans also, and to love our enemies. He prayed

for them that persecuted Him, and if we are His disciples, we ought to do so, too." And then the good bishop went on to tell his people what part each of them should take in the charitable work. Those who had money were to give it, and were to do such acts of kindness as they could besides. The poor, who had no silver or gold to spare, were to give their labour in a spirit of love. So all classes set to their tasks gladly, and they nursed the sick and buried the dead, without asking whether they were Christians or heathen.

When the heathen saw these acts of love, many of them were brought to wonder what it could be that made the Christians do them; and how they came to be so kind to poor and old people, to widows, and orphans, and slaves; and how it was that they were always ready to raise money for buying the freedom of captives, or for helping their brethren who were in any kind of trouble. And from wondering and asking what it was that led Christians to do such things, which they themselves would never have thought of doing, many of the heathen were brought to see that the Gospel was the true religion, and they forsook their idols to follow Christ.

After this, Cyprian had a disagreement with Stephen, bishop of Rome. Rome was the greatest city in the whole world, and the capital of the empire. There were many Christians there even in the time of the Apostles, and, as years went on, the church of Rome grew more and more, so that it was the greatest and richest and most important church of all. Now, the bishops who were at the head of this great church were naturally reckoned the foremost of all bishops, and had more power than any other; so that if a proud man got the bishopric of Rome, it was too likely that he might try to set himself up above his brethren, and to lay down the law to them. Stephen was, unhappily, a man of this kind, and he gave way to the temptation, and tried to lord it over other bishops and their

churches. But Cyprian held out against him, and made him understand that the bishop of Rome had no right to give laws to other bishops, or to meddle with the churches of other countries. He showed that, although St. Peter (from whom Stephen pretended that the bishops of Rome had received power over others) was the first of the Apostles, he was not of a higher class or order than the rest; and, therefore, that, although the Roman bishops stood first, the other bishops were their equals, and had received an equal share in the Christian ministry. So Stephen was not able to get the power which he wished for over other churches, and, after his death, Carthage and Rome were at peace again.

Part III

About six years after the death of the Emperor Decius, a fresh persecution arose under another emperor, named Valerian (A.D. 257). He began by ordering that the Christians should not be allowed to meet for worship, and that the bishops and clergy should be separated from their flocks. Cyprian was carried before the governor of Africa; and, on being questioned by him, he said: "I am a Christian and a bishop. I know no other gods but the one true God, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them. It is this God that we Christians serve; to Him we pray day and night, for ourselves and all mankind, and for the welfare of the emperors themselves," The governor asked him about his clergy. "Our laws," said Cyprian, "forbid them to throw themselves in your way, and I may not inform against them; but if they be sought after, they will be found, each at his post." The governor said that no Christians must meet for worship, under pain of death, and he sentenced Cyprian to be banished to a place called Curubis, about forty miles from Carthage. It was a pleasant abode, and Cyprian lived there for a year,

during which time he was often visited by his friends, and wrote many letters of advice and comfort to his brethren. And, as many of these were worse treated than himself, by being carried off into savage places, or set to work underground in mines, he did all that he could to relieve their distress by sending them money and other presents.

At the end of the year, the bishop was carried back to Carthage, where a new governor had just arrived. The emperor had found that his first law against the Christians was of little use; so he now made a second law, which was much more severe. It ordered that bishops and clergy should be put to death; that such Christians as were persons of worldly rank should lose all that they had, and be banished or killed; but it said nothing about the poorer Christians, who do not seem to have been in any danger. Cyprian thought that his time was now come; and when his friends entreated him to save himself by flight, he refused. He was carried off to the governor's country house, about six miles from Carthage, where he was treated with much respect, and was allowed to have some friends with him at supper. Great numbers of his people, on hearing that he had been arrested, went from Carthage to the place where he was, and watched all night outside the house in fear lest their bishop should be put to death, or carried off into banishment, without their knowledge. Next morning Cyprian was led to the place of judgment, which was a little way from the governor's palace. He was heated with the walk, under a burning sun; and, as he was waiting for the governor's arrival, a soldier of the guard, who had once been a Christian, kindly offered him some change of clothes. "Why," said the bishop, "should we trouble ourselves to remedy evils which will probably come to an end to-day?"

The governor took his seat, and required Cyprian to sacrifice to the gods. He refused; and the governor

then desired him to consider his safety. "In so righteous a cause," answered the bishop, "there is no need of consideration"; and on hearing the sentence, which condemned him to be beheaded, he exclaimed: "Praise be to God!" A cry arose from the Christians: "Let us go and be beheaded with him!" He was then led by soldiers to the place of execution. Many of his people climbed up into the trees which surrounded it, that they might see the last of their good bishop. After having prayed, he took off his upper clothing; he gave some money to the executioner, and as it was necessary that he should be blindfolded before suffering, he tied the bandage over his own eyes. Two of his friends then bound his hands, and the Christians placed cloths and handkerchiefs around him, that they might catch some of his blood. And thus St. Cyprian was martyred in the year 258. He is commemorated on September 14, but in our Prayer-Book, through confusion with another Cyprian, on September 26.

Valerian's attempts against the Gospel were all in vain. The Church had been purified and strengthened by the persecution under Decius, so that there were now very few who fell away for fear of death. The faith was spread by the banished bishops, in the same way as it had been in the last persecution (see p. 28); and, as has ever been found, "the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church."

CHAPTER IX

FROM GALLIENUS TO THE END OF THE LAST PERSECUTION

(A.D. 261–313)

Valerian, who had treated the Christians so cruelly, came to a miserable end. He led his army into Persia, where he was defeated and taken prisoner. He was

kept for some time in captivity; and we are told that he used to be led forth, loaded with chains, but with the purple robes of an emperor thrown over him, that the Persians might mock at his misfortunes. And when he had died from the effects of shame and grief, it is said that his skin was stuffed with straw, and was kept in a temple, as a remembrance of the triumph which the Persians had gained over the Romans, whose pride had never been so humbled before.

When Valerian was taken prisoner, his son Gallienus became emperor (A.D. 261). Gallienus sent forth a law by which the Christians, for the first time, were given the liberty of serving God without the risk of being persecuted. We might think him a good emperor for making such a law; but he really does not deserve much credit for it, since he seems to have made it merely because he did not care much either for his own religion or for any other.

And now there is hardly anything to be said of the next forty years, except that the Christians enjoyed peace and prosperity. Instead of being obliged to hold their services in the upper rooms of houses, or in burial-places underground, and in the dead of night, they built splendid churches, which they furnished with gold and silver plate, and with other costly ornaments. Christians were appointed to high offices, such as the government of provinces; and many of them held places in the emperor's palace. And, now that there was no danger or loss to be risked by becoming Christians, multitudes of people joined the Church who would have kept at a distance from it if there had been anything to fear. But, unhappily, the Christians did not make a good use of all their prosperity. Many of them grew worldly and careless, and had little of the Christian about them except the name; and they quarrelled and disputed among themselves, as if they were no better than mere

heathen. But it pleased God to punish them severely for their faults; for at length there came such a persecution as had never before been known.

At this time there were no fewer than four emperors at once; for Diocletian, who became emperor in the year 284, afterwards took in Maximian, Galerius, and Constantius to share his power and to help him in the labour of government. Galerius and Constantius, however, had not such full authority as the other two: they were called "Cæsars," while the two chief emperors were called "Augusti." Galerius married Diocletian's daughter, and it was supposed that both this lady and the empress, her mother, were Christians. The priests and others, whose interest it was to keep up the old heathenism, began to be afraid lest the empresses should make Christians of their husbands; and they sought how this might be prevented.

Now the heathen had some ways by which they used to try to find out the will of their gods. Sometimes they offered sacrifices of beasts, and, when the beasts were killed, they cut them open, and judged from the appearance of the inside whether the gods were well pleased or angry. And at certain places there were what they called *oracles,* where people who wished to know the will of the gods went through some ceremonies, and expected a voice to come from this or that god in answer to them. Sure enough, the voice very often *did* come, although it was not really from any god, but was managed by the juggling of the priests. And the answers which these voices gave were often contrived very cunningly, that they might have more than one meaning, so that, however things might turn out, the oracle was sure to come true. And now the priests frightened Diocletian with tricks of this kind. When he sacrificed, the insides of the victims (as the beasts offered in sacrifice were called) were said to look in such a way as to show that the

gods were angry. When he consulted the oracles, answers were given declaring that, so long as Christians were allowed to live on the earth, the gods would be displeased. And thus Diocletian, although at first he had been inclined to let them alone, became terrified, and was ready to persecute.

The first order against the Christians was a proclamation requiring that all soldiers, and all persons who held any office under the emperor, should sacrifice to the heathen gods (A.D. 298). And five years after this, Galerius, who was a cruel man, and very bitter against the Christians (although his wife was supposed to be one), persuaded Diocletian to begin a persecution in earnest.

Diocletian did not usually live at Rome, like the earlier emperors, but at Nicomedia, a town in Asia Minor, on the shore of the Propontis (now called the Sea of Marmora), and there the persecution began. He sent forth an order that all who would not serve the gods of Rome should lose their offices; that their property should be seized, and, if they were persons of rank, they should lose their rank. Christians were no longer allowed to meet for worship; their churches were to be destroyed, and their holy books were to be sought out and burnt (February 24, 303). As soon as this proclamation was set forth, a Christian tore it down.[1] He bore the punishment of what he had done, for he was roasted alive at a slow fire, and did not even utter a groan.

Before the end of that year, Diocletian put forth three more proclamations against the Christians. One of them ordered that the Christian teachers should be imprisoned; and very soon the prisons were filled with bishops and other clerics, while the evil-doers who were usually confined in them were set free. The next proclamation ordered that the prisoners should either

[1] This man was probably St. George, the patron saint of England.

sacrifice or be tortured; and the fourth directed that not only the bishops and clergy, but all Christians, should be required to sacrifice, on pain of torture.

These cruel laws were put into execution. Churches were pulled down, beginning with the great church of Nicomedia, which was built on a height, and overlooked the emperor's palace. All the Bibles and service-books that could be found, and a great number of other Christian writings, were thrown into the flames; and many Christians, who refused to give up their holy books, were put to death. The plate of churches was carried off, and was turned to profane uses, as the vessels of the Jewish temple had formerly been by Nebuchadnezzar.

The sufferings of the Christians were terrible. Some were thrown to wild beasts; some were burnt alive, or roasted on gridirons; some had their skins pulled off, or their flesh scraped from their bones; some were crucified; some were tied to branches of trees, which had been bent so as to meet, and then they were torn to pieces by the starting asunder of the branches. Thousands of them perished by one horrible death or other, so that the heathens themselves grew tired and disgusted with inflicting or seeing their sufferings; and at length, instead of putting them to death, they sent them to work in mines, or plucked out one of their eyes, or lamed one of their hands or feet, or set bishops to look after horses or camels, or to do other work unfit for persons of their venerable character. And it is impossible to think what miseries even those who escaped must have undergone; for the persecution lasted ten years, and they had not only to witness the sufferings of their own dear relations, or friends, or teachers, but knew that the like might, at any hour, come on themselves.

It was in the East that the persecution was hottest and lasted longest; for in Europe it was not much felt after the first two years. The Emperor Constantius,

who ruled over Gaul (now called France), Spain, and Britain, was kind to the Christians; and after his death, his son Constantine was still more favourable to them. There were several changes among the other emperors, and the Christians felt them for better or for worse, according to the character of each emperor; but it is needless to speak much of them in a little book like this. Galerius went on in his cruelty until, at the end of eight years, he found that it had been of no use towards putting down the Gospel, and that he was sinking under a fearful disease, something like that of which Herod, who had killed St. James, died (Acts xii. 23). He then thought with grief and horror of what he had done, and (perhaps in the hope of getting some relief from the God of the Christians) he sent forth a proclamation allowing them to rebuild their churches, and to hold their worship, and begging them to remember him in their prayers. Soon after this he died (A.D. 311).

The cruellest of all the persecutors was Maximin, who, from the year 305, had possession of Asia Minor, Syria, the Holy Land, and Egypt. When Galerius made his law in favour of the Christians, Maximin for a while pretended to give them the same kind of liberty in *his* dominions. But he soon changed again, and required that all his subjects should sacrifice—even that little babies should take some grains of incense into their hands, and should burn it in honour of the heathen gods; and when a season of great plenty followed after this, Maximin boasted that it was a sign of the favour with which the gods received his law. But it very soon appeared how false his boast was, for famine and plague began to rage throughout his dominions. The Christians, of course, had their share in the distress; but instead of triumphing over their persecutors, they showed the true spirit of the Gospel by treating them with kindness, by relieving the poor, by tending the sick, and by burying the

dead, who had been abandoned by their own nearest relations.

Although there is no room to give any particular account of the martyrs here, there is one of them who especially deserves to be remembered, because he was the first who suffered in Britain. This good man, Alban, while he was yet a heathen, fell in with a Christian priest, who was trying to hide himself from the persecutors. Alban took him into his own house, and sheltered him there; and he was so much struck with observing how the priest prayed to God, and spent long hours of the night in the religious exercises, that he soon became a believer in Christ. But the priest was hotly searched for, and information was given that he was hidden in Alban's house. And when the soldiers came to look for him there, Alban knew their errand, and put on the priest's dress, so that the soldiers seized him and carried him before the judge. The judge found that they had brought the wrong man, and, in his rage at the disappointment, he told Alban that he must himself endure the punishment which had been meant for the other. Alban heard this without any fear, and on being questioned, he declared that he was a Christian, a worshipper of the one true God, and that he would not sacrifice to idols which could do no good. He was put to the torture, but bore it gladly for his Saviour's sake, and then, as he was still firm in professing his faith, the judge gave orders that he should be beheaded. And when he had been led out to the place of execution, which was a little grassy knoll that rose on one side of the town, the soldier who was to have put him to death was so moved by the sight of Alban's behaviour, that he threw away his sword, and desired to be put to death with him. They were both beheaded, and the town of Verulam, where they suffered, has since been called St. Albans, from the name of the first British martyr.

This martyrdom took place early in the persecution; but (as we have seen) Constantius afterwards protected the British Christians, and his son Constantine, who succeeded to his share in the empire, treated them with yet greater favour. In the year 312, Constantine marched against Maxentius, who had usurped the government of Italy and Africa. Constantine seems to have been brought up by his father to believe in one God, although he did not at all know who this God was, nor how He had revealed Himself in Holy Scripture. But as he was on his way to fight Maxentius, he saw in the sky a wonderful appearance, which seemed like the figure of a cross, with words around it: "By this conquer." He then caused the cross to be put on the standards (or colours) of his army; and when he had defeated Maxentius, he set up at Rome a statue of himself, with a cross in its right hand, and with an inscription which declared that he owed his victory to that saving sign. About the same time that Constantine overcame Maxentius, Licinius put down Maximin in the East. The two conquerors now had possession of the whole empire; and they joined in publishing laws by which Christians were allowed to worship God freely according to their conscience (A.D. 313).

CHAPTER X

CONSTANTINE THE GREAT

(A.D. 313–337)

It was a great thing for the Church that the emperor of Rome should give it liberty; and Constantine, after sending forth the laws which put an end to the persecution, went on to make other laws in favour of the Christians. But he did not himself become a Christian

all at once, although he built many churches, and gave rich presents to others, and although he was fond of keeping company with bishops, and of conversing with them about religion. Licinius, the emperor of the East, who had joined with Constantine in his first laws, afterwards quarrelled with him, and persecuted the eastern Christians cruelly. But Constantine defeated him in battle (A.D. 324), and the whole empire was once more united under one head.

After his victory over Licinius, Constantine declared himself a Christian, which he had not done before; and he used to attend the services of the Church very regularly, and to stand all the time that the bishops were preaching, however long their sermons might be. He used even himself to write a kind of discourses something like sermons, and to read them aloud in the palace to all his court; but he really knew very little of Christian doctrine, although he was very fond of taking part in disputes about it. And, although he professed to be a Christian, he had not yet been made a member of Christ by baptism; for, in those days, people had so high a notion of the seriousness of sin after baptism, that many of them put off their baptism until they supposed that they were on their death-bed, for fear lest they should sin after being baptized. This was of course wrong; for it was a grave mistake to think that they might go on in sin so long as they were not baptized. They might have been cut off at any moment in the midst of all their sins; and even if they were spared, there was a great danger that, when they came to beg for baptism at last, they might not have that true spirit of repentance and faith, without which they could not be fit to receive the grace of the sacrament. And, therefore, the teachers of the Church used to warn people against putting off their baptism out of a love for sin; and when anyone had received *clinical* bap-

tism, as it was called (that is to say, *baptism on a sick-bed*), if he afterwards got well again, he was thought but little of in the Church.

But to come back to Constantine. He had many other faults besides his unwillingness to take on himself the duties of a baptized Christian; and, although we are bound to thank God for having turned his heart to favour the Church, we must not be blind to the emperor's faults. He had a firm belief in One God, who had been revealed in Jesus Christ. But he also wanted, like his predecessors, a religious basis for the unity of his empire. He thought he had found this basis in the Christian Church; and he was prepared to crush by force anyone who would not accept the Church's teaching. The Church was only too much inclined to accept imperial patronage. Multitudes became Christians without really accepting the Christian faith or intending to follow the Christian moral standard; and this was the cause of most of the subsequent corruption of the Church.

It took a long time to put down heathenism; for it would not have been safe or wise to force people to become Christians before they had come to see the falsehood of their old religion. Constantine, therefore, only made laws against some of its worst practices, and forbade any sacrifices to be offered in the name of the empire; but he did not hinder the heathen from sacrificing on their own account if they liked.

Soon after professing himself a Christian, the emperor began to build a new capital in the East. There had been a town called Byzantium on the spot before; but the new city was far grander, and he gave it the name of Constantinople, which means the City of Constantine. It was meant to be altogether Christian —unlike Rome, which was full of temples of heathen gods. And the emperors, from this time, usually lived at Constantinople, or at some other place in the

East. From this time Constantinople took more and more the place of Rome as the capital of the empire.

There will be more to say about Constantine in the next chapter. In the meantime, let us look at the progress of the Gospel.

It had, by this time, made its way into many countries beyond the bounds of the empire. There were Christians in Scotland and in India; there had long been great numbers of Christians in Persia and Arabia. Many of the Goths, who then lived about the Danube, had been converted by captives whom they carried off in their plundering expeditions during the reigns of Valerian and Gallienus (about A.D. 260); and other roving tribes had been converted by the same means. About the end of the third century, Gregory, who is called the *Enlightener,* had gone as a missionary bishop into Armenia, where he persuaded the king, Tiridates, to receive the Gospel, and to establish it as the religion of his country; so that Armenia had the honour of being the first Christian kingdom. The Georgians were converted in the reign of Constantine; and about the same time, the Ethiopians or Abyssinians (who live to the south of Egypt) were brought to the knowledge of the truth in a very remarkable way.

There was a rich Christian of Tyre, named Meropius, who was a philosopher, and wished to make discoveries in the countries towards India, which were then but little known. So he set out in a ship of his own, sailed down the Red Sea, and made a voyage to the East. On his way back, he and his crew landed at a place on the coast of Ethiopia, in search of fresh water, when the people of the country fell on them, and killed all but two youths named Ædesius and Frumentius, who were relations of Meropius. These lads were taken to the king's court, where, as they were better educated than the

Ethiopians, they soon got into great favour and power. The king died after a time, leaving a little boy to succeed him, and the two strangers were asked to carry on the government of the country until the prince should be old enough to take it into his own hands. They did this faithfully, and stayed many years in Ethiopia; and they used to look out for any Christian sailors or merchants who visited the country, and to hold meetings with such strangers and others for worship, although they were distressed that they had no clergy to minister to them. At length the young prince grew up to manhood, and was able to govern his kingdom for himself, and then Ædesius and Frumentius set out for their own country, which they had been longing to see for so many years. Ædesius went back to Tyre, where he became a deacon of the Church. But Frumentius stopped at Alexandria, and told his tale to the bishop, the great St. Athanasius (of whom we shall hear more by-and-by); and he begged that a bishop might be sent into Ethiopa to settle and govern the Church there. Athanasius, considering how faithful and wise Frumentius had shown himself in all his business, how greatly he was respected and loved by the Ethiopians, and how much he had done to spread the Gospel in the land of his captivity, said that no one was so fit as he to be bishop, and he consecrated Frumentius accordingly. To this day the chief bishop of the Abyssinian Church, instead of being chosen from among the clergy of the country, is always a person sent by the Egyptian bishop of Alexandria, and thus the Abyssinians still keep up the remembrance of the way in which their Church was founded, although the bishopric of Alexandria is now sadly fallen from the height at which it stood in the days of Athanasius and Frumentius.

Constantine used his influence with the king of Persia, whose name was Sapor, to obtain good treat-

ment for the Christians of that country; and the Gospel continued to make progress there. But this naturally raised the jealousy of the magi, who were the priests of the heathen religion of Persia, and they looked out for some means of doing mischief to the Christians. So a few years after the death of Constantine, when a war broke out between Sapor and the next emperor, Constantius, these magi told the king that his Christian subjects would be ready to betray him to the Romans, from whom they had got their religion. Sapor then issued orders that all Christians should pay an enormous tax, unless they would worship the gods of the Persians. Their chief bishop or patriarch, whose name was Symeon, on receiving this order, answered that the tax was more than they could pay, and that they worshipped the true God alone, who had made the sun, which the Persians ignorantly adored.

Sapor then sent forth a second order, that the bishops, priests, and deacons of the Christians should be put to death, that their churches should be destroyed, and that the plate and ornaments of the churches should be taken for profane uses; and he sent for Symeon, who was soon brought before him. The bishop had been used to make obeisance to the king, after the fashion of the country, but on coming into his presence now he refused to do so, lest it should be taken as a sign of that reverence which he was resolved to give to God alone. Sapor then required him to worship the sun, and told him that by doing so he might deliver himself and his people. But the bishop answered that if he had refused to do reverence to the king, much more must he refuse such honour to the sun, which was a thing without reason or life. On this, the king ordered that he should be thrown into prison until next day.

As he was on his way to prison, Symeon passed an old and faithful servant of the king, named Uthazanes,

who had brought up Sapor from a child, and stood high in his favour. Uthazanes, seeing the bishop led away in chains, fell on his knee and saluted him in the Persian fashion. But Symeon turned away his head, and would not look at him, for Uthazanes had been a Christian, and had lately denied the faith. The old man's conscience was smitten by this, and he burst out into lamentation: "If my old and familiar friend disowns me thus, what may I expect from my God whom I have denied!" His words were heard, and he was carried before the king, who tried to move him both by threats and by kindness. But Uthazanes stood firm against everything, and, as he could not be shaken in his faith, he was sentenced to be beheaded. He then begged the king, for the sake of the love which had long been between them, to grant him the favour that it might be proclaimed why he died—that he was not guilty of any treason, but was put to death only for being a Christian. Sapor was very willing to allow this, because he thought that it would frighten others into worshipping his gods. But it turned out as Uthazanes had hoped, for when it was seen how he loved his faith better than life itself, other Christians were encouraged to suffer, and even some heathen were brought over to the Gospel. Bishop Symeon was put to death after having seen a hundred of his clergy suffer before his eyes; and the persecution was renewed from time to time throughout the remainder of Sapor's long reign.[1]

[1] In honour of this martyred patriarch, his successors, the Assyrian patriarchs, have for some centuries borne the official title of Mar Shimun, or Lord Symeon.

CHAPTER XI

THE COUNCIL OF NICÆA
(A.D. 325)

We might expect to find that, when the persecutions by the heathen were at an end within the Roman empire, Christians lived together in peace and love, according to their Lord's commandment; but on the contrary they now began to be very much divided by quarrels among themselves. There had, indeed, been many false teachers in earlier times; but now, when the emperor had become a Christian, the troubles caused by such persons reached much further than before. The emperors took part in them, and made laws about them, and the whole empire was disturbed by them.

Constantine was very fond of taking a part in Church matters, without knowing much about them. Very soon after the first law by which he gave liberty to the Christians, he was called in to settle a quarrel which had been raised in Africa by the followers of one Donatus, who separated from the Church and set up bishops of their own, because they said that the bishops of Carthage and some others had not behaved rightly when the persecutors required them to deliver up the Scriptures.[1]

When Constantine put down Licinius and got possession of the East (as has been said), he found that a dispute of a different kind from the quarrel of the Donatists was raging there. One Arius, a presbyter (or priest) of Alexandria, had begun some years before this time to deny that our blessed Lord was God from everlasting. Arius was a crafty man, and did all that he could to make his opinion look as well as

[1] For these *Donatists* see Chapter XXI.

possible, but, try as he might, he was obliged to own that he believed our Lord to be a created being. And the difference between the highest of created beings and God, the maker of all creatures, is infinite; so that Arius' efforts to explain away his false teaching did not avail, so long as he did not allow our Lord to be truly God from all eternity.

The bishop of Alexandria, whose name was Alexander, excommunicated Arius for his impiety; that is to say, he solemnly turned him out of the Church, so that he should not be admitted to the Holy Communion and no faithful Christians should have anything to do with him. Thus Arius was obliged to leave Egypt, and he lived for a while at Nicomedia, near Constantinople, with a bishop who was an old friend of his. And while he was there, he made a set of songs to be sung at meals, and others for travellers, sailors, and the like. He hoped that people would learn these songs, without considering what mischief was in them, and that so his heresy would be spread.

When Constantine first heard of these troubles, he tried to quiet them by advising Alexander and Arius not to dispute about trifles. But he soon found that this would not do, and that the question whether our Lord and Saviour were God or a created being was so far from being a trifle that it was one of the most serious of all questions. In order, therefore, to get this and some other matters settled, he gave orders for a general council to meet. Councils of bishops within a certain district had long been common. In many countries they were regularly held once or twice a year, and besides these regular meetings, others were sometimes called together to consider any business which was particularly pressing. Some of these councils were very large: for instance, the bishop of Alexandria could call together the bishops of all Egypt, and the bishop of Antioch could call together all the bishops of Syria and some neighbouring

countries. But there was no bishop who could call a council of the whole Church, because there was no one who had any power over more than a part of it. But now Constantine, as he had decided to favour Christianity, thought that he might gather a council from all quarters of his empire, and this was the first of what are called the *general* councils.

It met in the year 325, at Nicæa (or Nice), in Bithynia, the north-west part of Asia Minor, and 318 bishops attended it. A number of priests, deacons, and laymen were also present; even some heathen philosophers went, out of curiosity to see what the Christians would do. Many of the bishops were very homely and simple men, who had not much learning, but their business was only to say plainly what their belief had always been, so that it might be known whether the doctrines of Arius agreed with this or no; and thus the good bishops might do their part very well, although they were not persons of any great learning or cleverness. One of these simpler bishops was drawn into talk by a philosopher, who tried to puzzle him about the truth of the Gospel. The bishop was not used to argue or to dispute much, and might have been no match for the philosopher in that way, but he contented himself with saying his creed, and the philosopher was so struck with this that he took to thinking more seriously of Christianity than he had ever thought before, and he ended in becoming a Christian himself.

There was a great deal of arguing about Arius and his opinions, and the chief person who spoke against him was Athanasius, a deacon from Alexandria, who had come with the bishop, Alexander. Athanasius could not sit as a judge in the council, because he was not a bishop, but he was allowed to speak in the presence of the bishops, and pointed out to them the errors which Arius tried to hide. So at last Arius was condemned, and the emperor banished him, with

some of his chief followers. And, in order to set forth the true Christian faith beyond all doubt, the council made that creed which we recite in the Communion service—all but some of the last part of it, which was made at a later time, as we shall see. It is called the *Nicene* Creed, from the name of the place where the council met; and the great point in it is, that it declares our blessed Lord to be "Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of *one substance*—that is to say, *of the same nature*—with the Father." For this truth, that our Lord has the *same nature* with the Almighty Father—this truth that He is really *God* from everlasting—was what the Arians could not be brought to own.

The emperor attended the council during the latter part of its sittings, and a story is told of him and a bishop named Acesius, who belonged to the sect of Novatianists. You will remember that this sect broke off from the Church in St. Cyprian's days, because Novatian and others thought that St. Cyprian and the Church were too easy with those who repented after having sacrificed in time of persecution (see p. 32); and, from having begun thus, it came to be hard in its notions as to the treatment of all sorts of penitents. But, as it had been only about the treatment of persons who had behaved weakly in persecution that the Novatianists had at first differed from the Church, and as persecution by the heathen was now at an end, Constantine hoped that, perhaps, they might be persuaded to return to the Church: so he invited some bishops of the sect to attend the council, and Acesius among them. When the creed had been made, Acesius declared that it was all true, and that it was the same faith which he had always believed; and he was quite satisfied with the rules which the council made as to the time of keeping Easter, and as to some other things. "Why, then," asked Constantine, "will you not join the Church?" Acesius said that

he did not think the Church strict enough in dealing with penitents. "Take a ladder, then," said the emperor, "and go up to heaven by yourself!"

CHAPTER XII

ST. ATHANASIUS

(A.D. 325–371)

Part I

Alexander, the bishop of Alexandria by whom Arius had been excommunicated, died soon after returning home from the Council of Nicæa, and Athanasius, who was then about thirty years of age, was chosen in his stead, and governed the Alexandrian Church for six-and-forty years. Every one knows the name St. Athanasius, from the creed which is called after him. That creed, indeed, was not made by St. Athanasius himself; but it is "*commonly called*" his because it sets forth the true Christian faith, of which he was the chief defender in his day. And we are bound to honour this learned and holy bishop as the man by whom especially God was pleased that His truth should be upheld and established against all the craft of Arius and his party, and even against all the power of the emperors of Rome.

For, although Arius had been sent into banishment, he soon managed to get into favour at the emperor's court. One of his friends, a priest, gained the ear of Constantine's sister, and this princess, when she was dying, recommended the priest to the emperor. Neither Constantine nor his sister understood enough of the matter to be on their guard against the deceits of the Arian, who was able to persuade the emperor that Arius had been ill-used, and that he did not really hold the opinions for which the council had con-

demned him. Arius, then, was allowed to return from banishment, and Constantine desired Athanasius to receive him back into the Church, saying that he was not guilty of the errors which had been laid to his charge. But Athanasius knew that this was only a trick, and he answered that, as Arius had been condemned by a council of the whole Church, he could not be restored by anything less than another such council.

The Arians, on finding that they could not win Athanasius over, resolved to attack him. They contrived that all sorts of charges against him should be carried to the emperor; and in the year 335, a council was held at Tyre for his trial. One story was, that he had killed an Egyptian bishop named Arsenius, that he had cut off his hand, and had used it for magical purposes (for, among other things, Athanasius was said by his enemies to be a sorcerer!); and the dried hand of a man was shown, which was said to be that of Arsenius. But when the time came for examining this charge, what was the confusion of the accusers at seeing Arsenius himself brought into the council! He was dressed in a long cloak, and Athanasius lifted it up, first on one side, and then on the other, so as to show that the man was not only alive, but had both his hands safe and sound. "Has God," he said, "made any man with three hands?" The leaders of the Arians had known that Arsenius was not dead, but they had hoped that he would not appear. But, happily for Athanasius, one of his friends had discovered Arsenius, and had kept him hidden until the right moment came for producing him.

Athanasius was able to answer the other charges against him as well as that about Arsenius; and the Arians, seeing that they must contrive some new accusation, sent some of his bitterest enemies into Egypt to rake up all the tales that they could find. Athanasius knew what he might expect from people

who could act so unfairly; he therefore resolved not to wait for their return, but went on board a ship which was bound for Constantinople. On arriving there, he posted himself in a spot outside the city, where he expected the emperor to pass in returning from a ride; and when Constantine came up, he threw himself in his way. The emperor was startled; but Athanasius told him who he was, and entreated him, by the thought of that Judgment in which princes as well as subjects must one day appear, to order that the case should be tried before himself, instead of leaving it to judges from whom no justice was to be looked for. The emperor agreed to this, and was very angry with those who had behaved so unjustly in the council at Tyre. But after a time some of the Arians told him another story—that Athanasius had threatened to stop the sailing of the fleet which carried corn from Alexandria to Constantinople. This was a charge which touched Constantine very closely, because Constantinople depended on the Egyptian corn for food, and he thought that the bishop, who had so much power at Alexandria, might perhaps be able to stop the fleet, and to starve the people of the capital if he pleased. And, whether the emperor believed the story, or whether he wished to shelter Athanasius for a while from his persecutors by putting him out of the way, he sent him into banishment at Treves, on the banks of the Moselle, in a part of Gaul which now belongs to Germany. Except for the separation from his flock, this banishment would have been no great hardship for Athanasius; for he was treated with great respect by the bishop of Treves, and by the emperor's eldest son, who lived there, and all good men honoured him for his steadfastness in upholding the true faith.

But, although Athanasius was removed, the Alexandrian Church would not admit Arius. So, after a while, the emperor resolved to have him admitted at

Constantinople, and a council of bishops agreed that it should be so. The bishop of Constantinople, whose name was Alexander, and who was almost a hundred years old, was grievously distressed at this; he desired his people to entreat God, with fasting and prayer, that it might not come to pass, and he threw himself before the altar, and prayed very earnestly that the evil which was threatened might be somehow turned away, or that, at least, he himself might not live to see it.

At length, on the evening before the day which had been fixed for receiving Arius into the Church, he was going through the streets of Constantinople, in high spirits, and talking with some friends of what was to take place on the morrow. But all at once he was taken violently ill, and went into a house which was near; and in a few minutes he was dead! His death, taking place at such a time and in such a way, made a great impression, and people were ready enough to look on it as a direct judgment of God on his impiety. But Athanasius, although he felt the awfulness of the unhappy man's sudden end, did not take it on himself to speak in this way; and we, too, shall do well not to pronounce judgment in such cases, remembering what our Lord said as to the Galileans who were slain by Pilate, and as to the men who were killed by the falling of the tower in Siloam (St. Luke xiii. 1-5). While we abhor the errors of Arius, let us leave the judgment of him to God.

Although Constantine in his last years was very much in the hands of the Arians, we must not suppose that he meant to favour their heresy. For these people (as I have said already, and shall have occasion to say again) were very crafty, and took great pains to hide the worst of their opinions. They used words which sounded quite right, except to the few persons who, like Athanasius, were quick enough to understand what bad meanings might be disguised under these

fair words. And whenever they wished to get one of the faithful bishops turned out, they took care not to attack him about his faith, but about something else, as we have seen in the case of Athanasius. Thus, they managed to throw dust in the eyes of the emperor, who did not know much about the matter, so that, while they were using him as a tool, and were persuading him to help them with all his power, he all the while fancied that he was firmly maintaining the Nicene faith.

Constantine, after all that he had done in religious disputes, was still unbaptized. Perhaps he was a *catechumen,* which (as has been explained before, on p. 22) was the name given to persons who were supposed to be in a course of training for baptism; but it is not certain that he was even so much as a catechumen. At last, shortly after the death of Arius, the emperor felt himself very ill, and believed that his end was near. He sent for Eusebius, the Arian bishop of Nicomedia, and told him that he had put off his baptism because he had wished to receive it in the River Jordan, like our Lord Himself; but as God had not granted him this, he begged that they would baptize him. He was baptized accordingly, and during the remaining days of his life he refused to wear any other robes than the white dress which used then to be put on at baptism, by way of signifying the cleansing of the soul from sin. And thus the first Christian emperor died, at a palace near Nicomedia, on Whit-Sunday in the year 337.

Part II

At Constantine's death, the empire was divided between his three sons. The eldest of them, whose name was the same with his father's, and the youngest, Constans, were friendly to the true faith. But the second son, Constantius, was won over by the Arians; and as, through the death of his brothers, he

got possession of the whole empire within a few years, his connexion with that party led to great mischief. All through his reign there were unceasing disputes about religion. Councils were almost continually sitting in one place or another, and bishops were posting about to one of them after another at the emperor's expense. Constantius did not mean ill; but he went even further than his father in meddling with things which he did not understand.

The Arians went on in the same cunning way as before. The behaviour of Leontius, bishop of Antioch, illustrates this. The Catholics[1] (that is to say, those who held the faith which the Church throughout all the world held) used to sing in church, as we do: "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost"; but the Arians sang: "Glory be to the Father, *by* the Son, *in* the Holy Ghost," for they did not allow that the Second and Third Persons are of the same nature with the First. Leontius, then, who was an Arian, and yet did not wish people to know exactly what he was, used to mumble his words, so that nobody could make them out, until he came to the part in which all parties agreed; and then he sang out loudly and clearly: "As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen." He was an old man, and sometimes he would point to his white hair, and say: "When this snow melts, there will be a great deal of mud," meaning that after his death the two parties would come to open quarrels, which he had tried to prevent during his lifetime by such crafty behaviour as that which has just been mentioned.

The three young emperors met shortly after their father's death. It was agreed between them that Athanasius should be allowed to return to Alexandria; and for this favour he was chiefly indebted to young

[1] The word *Catholic* means *Universal.* The *Roman Catholics* form only a part of the universal Church.

Constantine, who had known him during his banishment at Treves. The bishop returned accordingly, and was received with great rejoicing by his flock. But in about three years his enemies contrived that he should be again turned out (A.D. 341), and he was in banishment eight years. He was then restored again (A.D. 349); but his enemies watched their time, and spared no pains to get rid of him. One by one, they contrived to thrust out all the chief bishops who would have been inclined to take part with him; and at length, in the beginning of 356, Constantius sent a general named Syrianus to Alexandria, with orders to drive out Athanasius. The Alexandrians were so much attached to their great bishop that there was a fear lest they might prevent any open attempt against him. But Syrianus contrived to throw them off their guard; and one night, while Athanasius was keeping watch, with many of his clergy and people, in one of the churches (as the Christians of those days used to do before their great festivals and at other times), Syrianus suddenly beset the church with a great number of soldiers, and a multitude made up of Arians, Jews, and the heathen rabble of the city. When Athanasius heard the noise outside the church, he sat down calmly on his throne and desired the congregation to chant the hundred and thirty-sixth Psalm, in which God's deliverances of His people in old times are celebrated; and the whole congregation joined in the last part of every verse: "For His mercy endureth for ever." The doors were shut, but the soldiers forced them open and rushed in; and it was a fearful sight to see their drawn swords and their armour flashing by the lamplight in the house of God. As they advanced up the church, many of the congregation were trodden down or crushed to death, or pierced through with their darts. Athanasius stood calm in the midst of all the terrible din. His clergy, when they saw the soldiers pushing on towards the

sanctuary (as the part of the church was called which was railed off for the clergy), entreated him to save himself by flight; but he declared that he would not go until his people were safe, and waited until most of them had made their escape through doors in the upper part of the church. At last, when the soldiers were pressing very close to the sanctuary, the clergy closed round their bishop, and hurried him away by a secret passage. And when they had got him out of the church, they found that he had fainted; for although his courage was high, his body was weak and delicate, and the dreadful scene had overcome him. But he escaped to the deserts of Egypt, where he lived in peace among the monks for six years, until the death of Constantius. His enemies thought that he might, perhaps, seek a refuge in Ethiopia; and Constantius wrote to beg that the princes of that country would not shelter him, and that the bishop, Frumentius (see p. 47) might be sent to receive instruction in the faith from the Arian bishop who was put into the see of Alexandria. But Athanasius was safe elsewhere, and Frumentius wisely stayed at home.

The intruded Arian bishop of Alexandria was a Cappadocian named George. He was a coarse, ignorant, and violent man, and behaved with great cruelty to Athanasius's friends—even putting many of them to death. But Athanasius, from his quiet retreat, kept a watch over all that was done as to the affairs of the Church, both at Alexandria and elsewhere; and from time to time he wrote books, which reached places where he himself could not venture to appear. So that, although he was not seen during these years, he made himself felt both to the confusion of the Arians and to the comfort and encouragement of the faithful.

Part III

Constantius had no children, and after the death of Constans (A.D. 350), his nearest male relation was a

cousin named Julian. The emperor gave his sister in marriage to this cousin, and also gave him the government of a part of the empire; but he always treated him with distrust and jealousy, so that Julian never loved him. And this was not the worst of it; for Julian, who had lost his father when he was very young, and had been brought up under the direction of Constantius, took a strong dislike to his cousin's religion, which was forced on him in a way that a lively boy could not well be expected to relish. His teacher was a dry-as-dust Arian divine, to whom Christianity was less the Gospel of Christ than the sophistical quibbles of his party. Julian was obliged to spend a great part of his time in attending the services of the Church, and was even made a *reader* (which was one of the lowest kinds of ministers in the Church of those times); and, unfortunately, the end of all this was, that instead of being truly religious, he learnt to be a hypocrite. When he grew older, and was left more to himself, he fell into the hands of the heathen philosophers, who were very glad to get hold of a prince who might one day be emperor. So Julian's mind was poisoned with their opinions, and he gave up all belief in the Gospel, although he continued to profess himself a Christian for nine years longer. On account of his having thus forsaken the faith he is commonly called the *Apostate*.

At length, when Julian was at Paris, early in the year 361, Constantius sent him some orders which neither he nor his soldiers were disposed to obey. The soldiers lifted him up on a shield and proclaimed him emperor; and Julian set out at their head to fight for the throne. He marched boldly eastward, until he came to the Danube; then he embarked his troops and descended the great river for many hundreds of miles into the country which is now called Hungary. Constantius left Antioch, and was marching to meet Julian's army, when he was taken ill, and died at a

little town in Cilicia. Like his father, he was baptized only a day or two before his death.

Julian now came into possession of the empire without further dispute, and he did all that he could to set heathenism up again. But in many parts of the empire, Christianity had taken such root that very few of the people held to the old religion, or wished to see it restored. Thus, we are told that once, when the emperor went to a famous temple near Antioch, on a great heathen festival, in the hope of finding things carried on as they had been before Constantine's time, only one old priest was to be seen; and, instead of the costly sacrifices which had been offered in the former days of heathenism, the poor old man had nothing better than a single goose to offer.

Julian knew that in past times Christians had always been ready to suffer for their faith, and that the patience of the martyrs had always led to the increase of the Church. He did not think it wise, therefore, to go to work in the same way as the earlier persecuting emperors; but he contrived to annoy the Christians very much by other means, and sometimes great cruelties were committed against them under his authority. Yet, with all this, he pretended to allow them the exercise of their religion, and he gave leave to those who had been banished by Constantius to return home—not that he really meant to do them any kindness, but because he hoped that they would all fall to quarrelling among themselves, and that he would be able to take advantage of their quarrels. But in this hope he was happily disappointed; for they had learnt wisdom by suffering, and were disposed to make peace with each other as much as possible while they were all threatened by the enemies of the Saviour's very name.

The first thing that the heathen of Alexandria did when they heard of the death of Constantius had been

to kill the Arian bishop, George; for he had behaved in such a way that the heathens hated him even more than the Catholics did. Another Arian bishop was set up in his place; but when Julian had given leave for the banished to return, Athanasius came back, and the Arian was turned out.

The Alexandrians received Athanasius with great joy, and he did all that was in his power to reconcile the parties of Christians among themselves. For, although no one could be more earnest than he in maintaining every particle of the faith necessary for a true Christian, he was careful not to insist on things which were not necessary. He knew, too, that people who really meant alike were often divided from each other by not understanding one another's words; and he was always ready to make allowance for them as far as he could do so without giving up the truth. But Julian was afraid to let him remain at Alexandria, and was greatly provoked at hearing that he had converted and baptized some heathen ladies of rank. So the emperor wrote to the Alexandrians, telling them that, although they might choose another bishop for themselves, they must not let Athanasius remain among them, and banishing the bishop from all Egypt. Athanasius, when he heard of this, said to his friends: "Let us withdraw; this is but a little cloud which will soon pass over"; and he set off up the River Nile in a boat. After a while, another boat was seen in pursuit of him; but Athanasius then told his boatmen to turn round, and to sail down the river again; and when they met the other boat, from which they had not been seen until after turning, they were asked: "Have you seen Athanasius?" and they answered, "Yes, he is not far off!" So they were allowed to pass without being suspected of having the bishop on board. Thus Athanasius got safe back to the city, and there he lay hid securely while his enemies were searching for him elsewhere. But after

a little time he withdrew to the deserts, where he was welcomed and sheltered by his old friends the monks.

In his hatred of Christianity, Julian not only tried to restore heathenism, but showed favour to the Jews. He sent for some of them, and asked why they did not offer sacrifice as their law had ordered? They answered that it was not lawful to sacrifice except in the temple of Jerusalem, which was now in ruins, and did not belong to them, so that they could no longer fulfil the duty of sacrificing. Julian then gave them leave to build the temple up again, and the Jews came together in vast numbers from the different countries into which they had been scattered. Many of them had got great wealth in the lands of their banishment, and it is said that even the women laboured at the work, carrying earth in their rich silken dresses, and that tools of silver were used in the building. The Jews were full of triumph at the thought of being restored to their own land, and of reviving the greatness of David and Solomon. But it had been declared that the temple was to be overthrown, and that Jerusalem was to be "trodden down of the Gentiles," on account of the sin of God's ancient people (St. Luke xxi. 6, 24, etc.), so that this undertaking to rebuild the temple was regarded as a daring defiance of Him who had so spoken. It was a complete failure. It is said that an earthquake scattered the foundations which had been laid; balls of fire burst forth from the ground, scorching and killing many of the workmen; their tools were melted by lightning; and stories are told of other fearful sights, which put an end to the attempt. Julian, indeed, meant to set about it once more, after returning from a war which he had undertaken against the Persians. But he never lived to do so. Athanasius was not mistaken when he said that the emperor's tyranny would be only as a passing cloud; for Julian's reign lasted little more than a year and a half. He led his army into Persia

in the spring of 363, and in June of that year he was killed in a skirmish by night. There is a story that his last words were: "O Galilean, Thou hast conquered."

Julian left no child to succeed him in the empire, and the army chose as his successor a Christian named Jovian, who soon undid all that Julian had done in matters of religion. The new emperor invited Athanasius to visit him at Antioch, and took his advice as to the restoration of the true faith. But Jovian's reign lasted only eight months, and Valentinian, who was then made emperor, gave the empire of the East to his brother Valens, who was a furious Arian, and treated the Catholics with great cruelty. We are told, for instance, that when eighty of their bishops had carried a petition to him, he put them on board a ship, and when it had got out to sea, the sailors, by his orders, set it on fire, and made their escape in boats, leaving the bishops to be burned to death.

Valens turned many orthodox bishops (that is to say, bishops *of the right faith*) out of their sees, and meant to turn out Athanasius, who hid himself for a while in his father's tomb. But the people of Alexandria begged earnestly that their bishop might be allowed to remain with them, and the emperor did not think it safe to deny their request, lest there should be some outbreak in the city. And thus, while the faith of which Athanasius had so long been the chief defender, and for the sake of which he had borne so much, was under persecution in all other parts of the eastern empire, the great bishop of Alexandria was allowed to spend his last years among his own flock without disturbance. He died in the year 373, at the age of seventy-six.

CHAPTER XIII

THE MONKS

In the story of St. Athanasius, *monks* have been more than once mentioned, and it is now time to give some account of these people and of their ways.

The word *monk* properly means one who leads a *solitary* life; and the name was given to persons who professed to withdraw from the world and its business that they might give themselves up to serve God in religious thoughts and exercises. Among the Jews there had been whole classes of people who practised this sort of retirement: some, called *Essenes,* lived near the Dead Sea; and others, called *Therapeutæ,* in Egypt, where a great number of Jews had settled. Among the heathen of the East, too, a like manner of living had been common for ages, as it still continues to be; and many of them carry it to an excessive strictness, as we are told by travellers who have visited India, Tibet, and other countries of Asia.

Nothing of the kind, however, is commanded for Christians in the New Testament; and when Scripture warrant for the monastic life was sought for, the great patterns who were produced were Elijah and St. John the Baptist—the one of them an Old Testament prophet; the other, a holy man who lived, indeed, in the days when our Lord Himself was on the earth, but who was not allowed to enter into His Church, or to see it fully established by the coming of the Holy Ghost at the day of Pentecost. But still it was very natural that the notion of a life of strict poverty, retirement from the world, and employment in spiritual things, should find favour with Christians, as a means of fulfilling the duties of their holy calling; and so it seems that some of them took to this way of life very early. But the first who is named as a *hermit* (that is

to say, a *dweller in the wilderness*) was Paul, a young man of Alexandria, who, in the year 251, fled from the persecution of Decius into the Egyptian desert, where he is said to have lived ninety years. Paul, although he afterwards became very famous, spent his days without being known, until, just before his death, he was visited by another great hermit, St. Antony. But Antony himself was a person of great importance in his own lifetime.

He was born in the district of Thebes, in Egypt, in the very same year that Paul withdrew from the world. While a boy, he was thoughtful and serious. His parents died before he had reached the age of twenty, and left him considerable wealth. One day, when in church, he was struck by hearing the story of the rich young man who was charged to sell all that he had, give to the poor, and follow our Lord (St. Luke xviii. 18-22). At another time he was moved by hearing the charge to take no thought for the morrow (St. Matt. vi. 34). And in order to obey these commands (as he thought), Antony parted with all that belonged to him, bade farewell to his only sister, and left his home, with the intention of living in loneliness and devotion. He carried on this life for many years, and several times changed his abode, that he might seek out some place still wilder and more remote than the last. But he grew so famous that people flocked even into the depths of the wilderness to see him. A number of disciples gathered around him, and hermits, or monks, began to copy his way of life in other parts of Egypt. Antony's influence became very great; he made peace between enemies, comforted mourners, and gave advice to all who asked him as to spiritual concerns; and when he took the part of any oppressed person who applied to him, his interference was always successful. Affairs of this kind sometimes obliged him to leave his *cell* (as the dwellings of the monks were called); but he always re-

turned as soon as possible, for he used to say that "a monk out of his solitude is like a fish out of water." Even the emperors, Constantine and his sons, wrote to him with great respect, and asked him to visit their courts. He thanked them, but did not accept their invitation; and he wrote more than once to them in favour of St. Athanasius, whom he steadily supported in his troubles on account of the faith. On two occasions he visited Alexandria, for the purpose of strengthening his brethren in their sufferings for the truth. The first of these visits was while the last heathen persecution, under Maximin, was raging (see p. 41). Antony stood by the martyrs at their trials and in their death, and took all opportunities of declaring himself a Christian; but the persecutors did not venture to touch him, and, after waiting till the heat of the danger was past, he again withdrew to the wilderness. The second visit was in the time of the Arian disturbances, when his appearance had even a greater effect than before. The Catholics were encouraged by his exhortations, and a great number of conversions took place in consequence. Antony died, at the age of a hundred and five, in the year 356, a few days before the great bishop of Alexandria was driven to seek a refuge in the desert (see p. 61).

Antony, as we have seen, was a *hermit,* living in the wilderness by himself. But by-and-by other kinds of monks were established, who lived in companies together. Sometimes they were lodged in clusters of little cells, each of them having his separate cell, or two or three living together; sometimes the cells were all in one large building, called a *monastery*. The head of each monastery, or of each cluster of cells, was called *abbot,* which means *father*. And in some cases there were many monasteries belonging to one *order,* so that they were all considered as one society, and there was one chief abbot over all. Thus the order founded by Pachomius, on an island in the

Nile, soon spread, so that before his death it had eight monasteries, with three thousand monks among them; and about fifty years later, it had no fewer than fifty thousand monks.

These monks of Pachomius lived in cells, each of which contained three. Each cluster of cells had its abbot; the head of the order, who was called the *archimandrite* (which means *chief of the sheep-fold*), went round occasionally to visit all the societies which were under him; and the whole order met every year at the chief monastery, for the festival of Easter, and a second time in the month of August. The monks of St. Pachomius prayed many times a day. They fasted every Wednesday and Friday, and communicated every Sunday and Saturday. They took their meals together and sang psalms before each. They were not allowed to talk at table, but sat with their hoods drawn over their faces so that no one could see his neighbours, or anything but the food before him. Their dress was coarse and plain; the chief article of it was a rough goat-skin, in imitation of the prophet Elijah. They slept with their clothes on, not in beds, but in chairs, which were of such a shape as to keep them almost standing. They spent their time not only in prayers and other religious exercises, but in various kinds of simple work, such as labouring in the fields, weaving baskets, ropes, and nets, or making shoes. They had boats in which they sent the produce of their labour down the Nile to Alexandria; and the money which they got by selling it was not only enough to keep them, but enabled them to redeem captives, and to do such other acts of charity.

This account of the monks of St. Pachomius will give some notion of the monastic life in general, although one order differed from another in various ways. All that the monks had was considered to belong to them in common, after the pattern of the first Christians, as was supposed (Acts ii. 44; iv. 32); and

no one was allowed to have anything of his own. Thus we are told that when a monk was found at his death to have left a hundred pieces of silver, which he had earned by weaving flax, his brethren, who were about three thousand in number, met to consider what should be done with the money. Some were for giving it to the Church; some, to the poor. But the fathers of the society quoted St. Peter's words to Simon the sorcerer: "Thy money perish with thee" (Acts viii. 20); and on the strength of this text (which in truth had not much to do with the matter) they ordered that it should be buried with its late owner. St. Jerome, who tells the story, says that this was not done out of any wish to condemn the dead monk, but in order that others might be deterred from hoarding.

These different kinds of monks were first established in various parts of Egypt; but their way of life was soon taken up in other countries, and societies of women, who were called *nuns* (that is to say *mothers*) were formed under the same kind of rules.

One thing which had much to do with making monastic life so common was, that when persecution by the heathen was at an end, many Christians felt the want of something which might assure them that they were separate from the world, as Christ's true people ought to be. It was no longer enough that they should call themselves Christians, for the world had come to call itself Christian too. Perhaps we may think that it would have been better if those who wished to live religiously had tried to go on doing their duty in the world, and to improve it by the example and the influence of holy and charitable lives, instead of running away from it, but we must remember that the world was still so wicked, and so full of heathen ideas and practices, that many thought they could not live a Christian life in it. They were certainly much mistaken if they fancied that by hiding themselves in the desert they were likely to escape

temptation. For temptations followed them into their retreats, and we have only too many proofs, in the accounts of famous monks, that the effect of this mistake was often very sad indeed. And we may be sure that if the good men who, in those days, were active in recommending the life of monks had been able to foresee how things would turn out, they would have been much more cautious in what they said of it.

It was not everyone who was fit for such a life, and many took it up without rightly considering whether they *were* fit for it. The kind of work which was provided for them was not enough to occupy them thoroughly, and many of them suffered grievously from temptations to which their idleness laid them open. It was supposed, indeed, that they might find the thoughts of heavenly things enough to fill their minds, and, when a philosopher asked Antony how he could live without books, he answered that for him the whole creation was a book, always at hand, in which he could read God's word whenever he pleased. But it was not everyone who could find such delight in that great book; and many of the monks, for want of employment, were tormented by all sorts of evil thoughts, nay, some of them were even driven into madness by their way of life.

The monks ran into very strange mistakes as to their duty towards their kindred. Even Antony himself, although he was free from many of the faults of spiritual pride and the like, which became too common among his followers, thought himself bound to overcome his love for his young sister. And, as another sample of the way in which monks were expected to deaden their natural affections, I may tell you how his disciple Pior behaved. Pior, when a youth, left his father's house and vowed that he would never again look on any of his relations—which was surely a very rash and foolish and wrong vow. He went into the desert, and had lived there fifty years, when

his sister heard that he was still alive. She was too infirm to go in search of him, but she contrived that the abbot, under whose authority he was, should order him to pay her a visit. Pior went accordingly, and, when he had reached her house, he stood in front of it and sent to tell her that he was there. The poor old woman made all haste to get to him; her heart was full of love and delight at the thoughts of seeing her brother again after so long a separation. But as soon as Pior heard the door opening, he shut his eyes, and he kept them shut all through the meeting. He refused to go into his sister's house, and when he had let her see him for a short time in this way, without showing her any token of kindness, he hurried back to the desert.

In later times monks were usually ordained. But at first it was not intended that they should be so, and in each monastery there were only so many priests as were needed for the performance of Divine service and other works of the ministry. And in those early days, many monks had a great fear of being ordained priests or bishops, because they thought that the active business in which the clergy were obliged to engage would hinder their reaching to the higher degrees of holiness. Thus, a famous monk, named Ammonius, on being chosen for a bishopric, cut off one of his ears, thinking that this blemish would prevent his being made a priest, as it would have done under the law of Moses (Lev. xxi. 17-23), and when he was told that it was not so in the Christian Church, he threatened to cut out his tongue.

It was not long before the sight of the great respect which was paid to the monks led many worthless people to call themselves monks for the sake of what they might get by doing so. These fellows used to go about wearing heavy chains, uncouthly dressed, and behaving roughly, and they told outrageous stories of visions and of fights with devils which they pretended

to have had. By such tricks they got large sums of money from people who were foolish enough to encourage them, and they spent it in the most shameful ways.

But besides these vile hypocrites, many monks who seem to have been sincere enough ran into very strange extravagances. There was one kind of them called *Grazers,* who used to live among mountains, without any roof to shelter them, browsing, like beasts, on grass and herbs, and by degrees growing much more like beasts than men. And in the beginning of the fifth century, one Symeon, founded a new sort of monks, who were called *Stylites*—that is to say, *pillar saints*—from a Greek word, which means a pillar. Symeon was a Syrian, and lived on the top of one pillar after another for seven-and-thirty years. Each pillar was higher than the one before it; the height of the last of them was forty cubits (or seventy feet), and the top of it was only a yard across. There Symeon was to be seen, with a heavy iron chain round his neck, and great numbers of people flocked to visit him; some of them even went all the way from Britain. And when he was dead, a monk, named Daniel, got the old cowl which he had worn, and built himself a pillar near Constantinople, where he lived three-and-thirty years. The high winds sometimes almost blew him from his place, and sometimes he was covered for days with snow and ice, until the emperor Leo made him submit to let a shed be built round the top of his pillar. The fame and influence which these monks gained were immense. They were supposed to have the power of prophecy and of miracles; they were consulted even by emperors and kings in the most important matters; and sometimes, on great occasions, when a stylite descended from his pillar, or some famous hermit left his cell, and appeared among the crowds of a city, he was able to make everyone bend to his will.

We must not be blind to the serious errors of the monks, but we are bound also to own that God was pleased to make them the means of great good. The monks did much for the conversion of the heathen, and when the ages of darkness came on, after the overthrow of the Roman empire in the West, they rendered inestimable service in preserving the knowledge of learning and religion, which, but for them, might have utterly perished from the earth.

CHAPTER XIV

ST. BASIL AND ST. GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS. COUNCIL OF CONSTANTINOPLE

(A.D. 373–381)

PART I

ALTHOUGH St. Athanasius was now dead, God did not fail to raise up champions for the true faith. Three of the most famous of these were natives of Cappadocia —namely, Basil, his brother Gregory of Nyssa, and his friend Gregory of Nazianzus. But although Gregory of Nyssa was a very good and learned man, and did great service to the truth by his writings, there was nothing remarkable in the story of his life, so the other two are the subject of this chapter.

Basil and Gregory of Nazianzus were both born about the year 329. Basil was of a noble Christian family. Gregory's father had belonged to a strange sect called Hypsistarians, whose religion was a mixture of Jewish and heathen notions; but he had been converted from it by his wife, Nonna, who was a very pious and excellent woman, and, before his son's birth, he had risen to be bishop of Nazianzus.

The two youths became acquainted at school in Cappadocia, and, when they were afterwards sent to

the famous schools of Athens, they grew into the closest friendship. They lived and read and walked together; Gregory says that they had all things common, and that it was as if they had only one soul in two bodies. Athens was an excellent place for learning all that the wise men of this world could teach, and therefore students flocked to it from distant countries. But it was a dangerous place for Christian students, for the teachers were heathen philosophers, and knew well how to entangle them in arguments, so that many of the pupils, who did not rightly understand the grounds of their faith, were deceived into giving it up. Thus, at the very time when Basil and Gregory were at Athens, Julian was also there, sucking in the heathen notions which led to so much evil when he afterwards became emperor. But the two Cappadocians kept themselves clear from all the snares of "philosophy and vain deceit" (Col. ii. 8), and although they were the foremost of all the students in Athens for learning, and might have hoped to make a great figure in the world by their talents, they resolved to give up all worldly ambition and to devote themselves to the ministry of the Church.

So they were both ordained, and their friendship continued as warm as ever. Gregory did many kind offices to Basil, and at length, when the archbishopric of Cæsarea, the chief city of Cappadocia, fell vacant, Gregory had a great share in getting his friend chosen to it. Basil was now in a very high office, with many bishops under him, and he had become noted as one of the chief defenders of the Catholic faith. And when the emperor Valens set up Arianism in all other parts of his dominions, Basil remained at his post and kept the Church of Cæsarea free from the heresy. Valens came into Cappadocia, and was angry that, while his wishes were obeyed everywhere else, Basil should hold out against them, so he sent an officer named

Modestus to Cæsarea and ordered him to require the archbishop to submit, on pain of being turned out. Modestus told Basil his errand, and threatened him with loss of his property, torture, banishment, and even death, in case of his refusal. But Basil was not at all daunted. "Think of some other threat," he said, "for these have no influence on me. As for loss of property, I run no risk, for I have nothing to lose except these mean garments and a few books. Nor does a Christian care for banishment, since he has no home upon earth, but makes every country his own; or rather, he looks on the whole world as God's, and on himself as God's pilgrim upon earth. Neither can tortures harm me, for my body is so weak that the first blow would kill me, and death would be a gain, for it would but send me the sooner to Him for whom I live and labour, and to whom I have long been journeying."

Modestus returned to his master with an account of what had been said, and Valens himself soon after came to Cæsarea. But when he went to the cathedral on the festival of the Epiphany, and saw Basil at the head of his clergy, and witnessed their solemn service, he was struck with awe. He wished to make an offering, as the custom was, but none of the clergy went to receive his gift, and he almost fainted at the thought of being thus rejected from the Church, as if he had no part or lot in it. He afterwards sent for Basil, and had some conversation with him, and the end of the affair was that he not only left Basil in possession of his see, but bestowed a valuable estate on a hospital which the archbishop had lately founded.

While Basil had risen, by Gregory's help, to be an archbishop, Gregory himself was only a priest. He would not have taken even this office but that his father ordained him to it almost by force; and he had a great dread of being raised to the high and difficult office of a bishop. But Basil, for certain reasons,

wished to establish a bishop in a little town called Sasima, and he fixed on his old friend, without, perhaps, thinking so much as he ought to have thought, whether the place and the man were likely to suit each other. The old bishop of Nazianzus did all that he could to overcome his son's unwillingness, and Gregory was consecrated, but he thought himself unkindly used, and complained much of Basil's behaviour in the matter.

After a time, Basil and other leaders of the orthodox —that is, of those who *held the right faith*—urged Gregory to undertake a mission to Constantinople, and he agreed to go, in the hope of being able to do some good (A.D. 378). The bishopric of that great city had been in the hands of Arians for nearly forty years, and although there were many people of other sects there, the orthodox were but a handful. Gregory, when he began his labours, found that there was a strong feeling against him and the true doctrine. He could not get the use of any church, and was obliged to hold his service in a friend's house. He was often attacked by the Arian mob; he was stoned, he was carried before the magistrates on charges of disturbing the peace; the house which he had turned into a chapel was broken into by night, and terrible outrages were committed in it. But Gregory held on notwithstanding all this, and after a while his grave and gentle character, his eloquent and instructive preaching, and the piety of his life, wrought a great change, so that his little place of worship became far too small to hold the crowds which flocked to it. While Gregory was thus employed, Basil died, in the year 379.

PART II

Both parts of the empire were now again under orthodox princes. Valens had lost his life in war, without leaving any children (A.D. 378). He fell in

the great Battle of Adrianople, which is one of the turning points of history. The deserts of Central Asia had long been drying up, and the Tartar tribes called Huns, who had lived there, were forcing their way westward. The Goths, whose home was in what is now Southern Russia, were pushed forward to the banks of the Danube, and asked permission to settle in the Roman empire. They were given leave to do so, but the Roman officials treated them so badly that they rose in revolt under their king, Fritigern, and marched on Constantinople. Valens led out his army against them; the army was cut to pieces and Valens was slain. It was nearly six centuries since the empire had suffered such a defeat, and it was the beginning of the end. Fritigern could not take Constantinople, but the Goths learned that the empire was not invincible. The death of Valens put an end to the Arian influence at the court of Constantinople, which had lasted about forty years. Deprived of imperial support, the Arian party soon withered away. Only among the Goths and Vandals, who had been converted by Arian missionaries, did the heresy persist. Valentinian's sons, Gratian and Valentinian the Second, now inherited the whole empire. But Gratian felt the burden of government too much for himself, a lad of nineteen, and for his little brother, who was but seven years old, and he gave up the East to a brave Spaniard, named Theodosius, in the hope that he would be able to defend it.

Theodosius came to Constantinople in the year 380, and found things in the state which has just been described. He turned the Arian bishop and his clergy out of the churches, and gave Gregory possession of the cathedral. Gregory knew that the emperor wished to help the cause of the true faith, and he did as Theodosius wished; but he was very sad and uneasy at being thus thrust on a flock of which the greater part as yet refused to own him.

Theodosius then called a council, which met at Constantinople in the year 381, and is reckoned as the Second General Council—the Council of Nicæa (see Chap. XI.) having been the first. One act of this council was to add to the Nicene Creed some words about the Holy Ghost, by way of guarding against the errors of a party who were called Macedonians, after one Macedonius, who had been bishop of Constantinople, for these people denied the Godhead of the Holy Ghost, although they had given up the errors of Arius as to the Godhead of our blessed Lord.

But afterwards, some of the bishops who attended the council fell to disputing about the choice of a bishop for Antioch, and Gregory, who tried to persuade them to agree, found that instead of heeding his advice they all fell on him, and they behaved so badly to him that he gave up his bishopric, which, indeed, he had before wished to do. Theodosius was very sorry to lose so good a man from that important place; but Gregory was glad to get away from its troubles and anxieties to the quiet life which he loved best. He took charge of the diocese of Nazianzus (which had been vacant since his father's death some years before) until a regular bishop was appointed to it, and he spent his last days in retirement, soothing himself with religious poetry and music. One of the holiest men of the English Church, Bishop Ken (the author of the Morning and Evening Hymns), used often to compare himself with St. Gregory of Nazianzus, for Bishop Ken, too, was driven from his bishopric in troubled times, and, in the poverty, sickness, and sorrow of his last years, he, too, used to find relief in playing on his lute, and in writing hymns and other devout poems.

Theodosius was resolved to establish the right faith, according as the council had laid it down. But it seems that at one time some of the bishops were afraid

lest an Arian, named Eunomius, should get an influence over his mind, and should persuade him to favour the Arians. And there is a curious story of the way in which one of these bishops, who was a homely old man, from some retired little town, tried to show the emperor that he ought not to encourage heretics. On a day when a number of bishops went to pay their respects at court, this old man, after having saluted the emperor very respectfully, turned to his eldest son, the young emperor Arcadius, and stroked his head as if he had been any common boy. Theodosius was very angry at this behaviour, and ordered that the bishop should be turned out. But as the officers of the palace were hurrying him towards the door, the old man addressed the emperor, and told him that as *he* was angry on account of the slight offered to the prince, even so would the Heavenly Father be offended with those who should refuse to His Son the honours which they paid to Himself. Theodosius was much struck by this speech; he begged the bishop's forgiveness, and showed his regard for the admonition by keeping Eunomius and the rest of the Arians at a distance.

The emperor then made some severe laws, forbidding all sorts of sects to hold their worship, and requiring them to join the Catholic Church. Now, this was, no doubt, a great mistake; for it is impossible to force religious belief on people; and it is wrong to make men pretend a belief which they do not feel in their hearts. But Theodosius had not had the same opportunities which we have since had of seeing how useless such laws are, and what mischief they generally do; so that, instead of blaming him, we must give him credit for acting in the way which he believed most likely to promote the glory of God and the good of his subjects. And, although some of his laws seem very severe, there is reason to think that these were never acted on.

But about the same time, in Gaul, the government of which had been usurped by one Maximus, a Spanish priest named Priscillian, and some of his companions, were put to death on account of heresy. Such things became only too common afterwards; but at the time the punishment of Priscillian struck all good men with horror. St. Martin, bishop of Tours, who was called "The Apostle of the Gauls," did all that he could to prevent it. St. Ambrose (of whom you will hear more in the next chapter) would not, on any account, have to do with the bishops who had been concerned in it; and the chief of these bishops was afterwards turned out of his see, and died in banishment. We may do well to remember that this first instance of punishing heresy with death was under the government of an usurper, who had made his way to power by rebellion and murder.

CHAPTER XV

ST. AMBROSE

(A.D. 374–397)

THE greatest bishop of the West in these times was St. Ambrose, of Milan. He was born about the year 340, and thus was ten or twelve years younger than St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nazianzus. His father had held a very high office under the emperors; Ambrose himself was brought up as a lawyer, and had risen to be governor of Liguria, a large country in the north of Italy, of which Milan was the chief city.

The bishop of Milan, who was an Arian, died in the year 374, and then a great dispute arose between the orthodox and the Arians as to choosing a new

bishop, so that it seemed as if they might even come to blows about it. When both parties were assembled in the cathedral for the election, the governor, Ambrose, went and made them a speech, desiring them to manage their business peaceably; and it is said that, as soon as he had done, a little child's voice was heard crying out: "Ambrose bishop!" All at once, the whole assembly caught up the words, which seemed to have something providential in them; and they insisted that the governor should be the new bishop. Now, although Ambrose had been brought up as a Christian, he was still only a catechumen, and had never thought of being ordained, still less of being a bishop; and he was afraid to undertake so high and holy an office. He therefore did all that he could to get himself excused. He tried to make the people of Milan think that his temper was too severe; but they saw through his attempts. He then escaped from the town more than once, but he was brought back. Valentinian, who was then emperor, approved the choice of a bishop; and Ambrose was first baptized, and a few days afterwards he was consecrated.

He now studied very hard in order to make up for his want of preparation for his office. He was very active in all sorts of pious and charitable works, and he soon became famous as a preacher. His steady firmness in maintaining the orthodox faith was especially shown when Valentinian's widow, Justina, who was an Arian, wished to take one of the churches of Milan from the Catholics, and to give it to her own sect; and after a hard struggle, Ambrose got the better of her. He afterwards gained a very great influence both over Justina's son, Valentinian II., and over his elder brother Gratian. And when Gratian had been murdered by the friends of Maximus (the same Maximus who put Priscillian to death), and Theodosius came into the West to avenge his murder

(A.D. 388), Ambrose had no less influence with Theodosius than he had had with the younger emperors.

Theodosius took up his abode for a time at Milan after he had defeated and slain the usurper Maximus. Soon after his arrival in the city, he went to service at the cathedral, and was going to seat himself in the part of it nearest to the altar, as at Constantinople the emperor's seat was in that part of the church. But Ambrose stopped him, and told him that none but the clergy were allowed to sit there; and he begged the emperor to take a place at the head of the people outside the altar-rails. Theodosius was so far from being angry at this that he thanked the bishop, and explained to him how it was that he had made the mistake of going within the rails; and when he got back to Constantinople, he astonished his courtiers by ordering that his seat should be removed to a place answering to that in which he had sat at Milan; for that, he said, was much more seemly and proper.

There are other stories about Ambrose's dealings with Theodosius; but I shall mention only one, which is the most famous of all. One day when there was to be a great chariot race at Thessalonica, it happened that a famous charioteer, who was a favourite with the people of the town, had been put in prison by the governor on account of a very serious crime. On this a mob went to the governor, and demanded that the man should be set at liberty. The governor refused; and thereupon the mob grew furious, and murdered him, with a number of his soldiers and other persons. The emperor might have been excused for showing heavy displeasure at this outrage; but unhappily the great fault of his character was a readiness to give way to violent fits of passion; and on hearing what had been done, his anger knew no bounds. Ambrose, who was afraid lest some serious mischief should follow, did all that he could to soothe the emperor, and got a promise from him that the Thessalonians

should be spared. But other advisers afterwards inflamed Theodosius against the offenders, so that he gave orders for a fearful act of cruel and treacherous vengeance. The people of Thessalonica were invited in the emperor's name to some games in the circus or amphitheatre, which was a building open to the sky, and large enough to hold many thousands. And when they were all gathered together in the place, instead of the amusement which had been promised them, they were cut down by soldiers, who for three hours carried on a savage butchery, sparing neither old men, women, nor children, and making no difference between innocent and guilty, Thessalonian or stranger. Among those who had come to see the games there was a foreign merchant, who had had no concern in the outrage of the mob which was punished in this frightful way. He had two sons with him, and he offered his own life, with all that he had, if the soldiers would but spare one of them. The soldiers were willing to agree to this, but the poor father could not make up his mind which of the sons he should choose; and the soldiers, who were too much enraged by their horrid work to make any allowance for his feelings, stabbed both the youths before his eyes at the same moment. The number of persons slain in the massacre is not certain; there were at least as many as seven thousand, and some writers say that there were fifteen thousand.

When Ambrose heard of this dreadful massacre, he was filled with grief and horror; for he had relied on the emperor's promise to spare the Thessalonians, and great care had been taken that he should not know anything of the orders which had been afterwards sent off. He wrote a letter to Theodosius, exhorting him to repent, and telling him that, unless he did so, he could not be admitted to the Holy Communion. This letter brought the emperor to feel that he had committed a great sin; but Ambrose wished to make him

feel it far more. As Theodosius was about to enter the cathedral, the bishop met him in the porch, and, laying hold on his robe, desired him to withdraw, because he was a man stained with innocent blood. The emperor said that he was deeply grieved for his offence; but Ambrose told him that this was not enough—that he must show some more public proofs of his repentance for so great a sin. The emperor withdrew accordingly to his palace, where he shut himself up for eight months, refusing to wear his imperial robes, and spending his time in sadness and penitence. At length, when Christmas was drawing near, he went to the bishop, and humbly begged that he might be admitted into the Church again. Ambrose desired him to give some substantial token of his sorrow, and the emperor agreed to make a law by which no sentence of death should be executed until thirty days after it had been passed. This law was meant to prevent any more such terrible effects of sudden passion in princes as the massacre of Thessalonica. The emperor was then allowed to enter the church, where he fell down on the pavement, with every appearance of the deepest grief and humiliation; and it is said that from that time he never spent a day without remembering the crime into which his passion had betrayed him.

Theodosius was the last emperor who reigned over the whole Roman empire. He is called "the Great," and in many respects was well deserving of the name. He died in 395, and St. Ambrose died two years after, on Easter eve, in the year 397. He is commemorated in the kalendar of our Prayer-Book on April 4.

CHAPTER XVI

THE TEMPLE OF SERAPIS

(A.D. 391)

In the account of Constantine, it was mentioned that the emperors after their conversion did not try to put down heathenism by force, or all at once (p. 45). For the wise teachers of the Church knew that this would not be the right way of going to work, but that it would be more likely to make the heathen obstinate, than to convert them. Thus, St. Augustine says in one of his sermons: "We must first endeavour to break the idols in their hearts. When they themselves become Christians, they will either invite us to the good work of destroying their idols, or they will be beforehand with us in doing so. And in the meanwhile, we must pray for them, not be angry with them."

But in course of time, as the people were more and more brought off from heathenism, and as the belief of the Gospel worked its way more thoroughly among all classes of them, laws were sent forth against offering sacrifices, burning incense, and the like, to the heathen gods. These laws were by degrees made stricter and stricter, until, in the reign of Theodosius, it was forbidden to perform any act of heathen worship. Now let us see what happened to the idols of Egypt in this reign.

In the year 391 an old heathen temple at Alexandria was given to the bishop of the city, who wished to build a church on the spot. In digging out the foundation for the church, some strange and disgusting things, which had been used in the heathen worship, were found; and some of the Christians carried these about the streets by way of mocking at the religion of the heathen. The heathen part of the

inhabitants were enraged; a number of them made an uproar, killed some Christians, and then shut themselves up in the temple of one of their gods called Serapis, whom they believed to be the protector of Alexandria. This temple was surrounded by the houses of the priests and other buildings; and the whole was so vast and so magnificent that it was counted as one of the wonders of the world.

The rioters, who had shut themselves up in the temple, used to rush out from it now and then, killing some of the Christians who fell in their way, and carrying off others as prisoners. These prisoners were desired to offer sacrifice; if they refused, they were cruelly tortured, and some of them were even crucified. A report of these doings was sent to Theodosius, and he ordered that all the temples of Alexandria should be destroyed. The governor invited the defenders of the temple of Serapis to attend in the market-place, where the emperor's sentence was to be read; and, on hearing what is was, they fled in all directions, so that the soldiers, who were sent to the temple, found nobody there to withstand them.

The idol of Serapis was of such vast size that its arms reached from one side of the temple to the other. It was adorned with jewels, and was covered with plates of gold and silver; and its worshippers believed that, if it were hurt in any way, heaven and earth would go to wreck. So when a soldier mounted a ladder and raised his axe against it, the heathen who stood by were in great terror, and even some of the Christians could not help feeling a little uneasiness as to what might follow. But the stout soldier first made a blow which struck off one of the idol's cheeks, and then dashed his axe into one of his knees. Serapis, however, bore all this quietly, and the bystanders began to draw their breath more freely. The soldier worked away manfully, and, after a while, the huge head of the idol came crashing down, when a swarm

of rats, which had long made their home in it, rushed forth and scampered off in all directions. Even the heathen who were in the crowd, on seeing this, began to laugh at their god. The idol was demolished, and the pieces of it were carried into the circus, where a bonfire was made of them; and when the temple was examined, a number of tricks by which the priests had deceived the people were found out, so that many heathen were converted in consequence of having thus seen the vanity of their old religion and the falsehood of the means by which it was kept up.

Egypt does not depend on rain for its crops, but on the rising of the river Nile, which floods the country at a certain season, and the heathen had long said that the Christians were afraid to destroy the idols of Egypt lest the gods should punish them by not allowing the water to rise. After the destruction of Serapis, the usual time for the rising of the river came, but there were no signs of it, and the heathen began to be in great delight and to boast that their gods were going to take vengeance. Some weak Christians, too, began to think that there might be some truth in this, and sent to ask the emperor what should be done. "Better," he said, "that the Nile should not rise at all than that we should buy the fruitfulness of Egypt by idolatry!" After a while the Nile began to swell; it soon mounted above the usual height of its flood, and the pagans were now in hopes that Serapis was about to avenge himself by such a deluge as would punish the Christians for the destruction of the idol, but they were again disappointed by seeing the waters sink down to their proper level.

The emperor's orders were executed by the destruction of the Egyptian temples and their idols. But we are told that the bishop of Alexandria saved one image as a curiosity and lest people should afterwards deny that their forefathers had ever been so foolish as to worship such things. Some say that this image was

a figure of Jupiter, the chief of the heathen gods; others say that it was the figure of a monkey, for even monkeys were worshipped by the Egyptians!

CHAPTER XVII

CHURCH GOVERNMENT

By this time the Gospel had not only been firmly settled as the religion of the Roman empire, but had made its way into most other countries of the then known world. Here, then, we may stop to take a view of some things connected with the Church, and it will be well, in doing so, to remember what is wisely said by the Church of England, in her thirty-fourth article, on "the Traditions of the Church"—that is to say, the practices *handed down* in the Church. "It is not necessary that traditions and ceremonies be in all places one, and utterly like, for at all times they have been divers"—that is, they have differed in different parts of Christ's Church—"and they may be changed according to the diversities of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word."

First, then, as to the ministers of the Church. The three orders which had been from the beginning—bishops, presbyters (or priests), and deacons—were considered to stand by themselves, as the only orders *necessary* to a church. These are called "Holy Orders." But early in the third century a number of "minor" orders were introduced, all lower than that of deacons. These were the *sub-deacons*, who helped the deacons in the care of the poor and of the property belonging to the church; the *acolytes*, who lighted the lamps and assisted in the celebration of the sacraments; the *exorcists*, who took charge of persons

suffering from the possession by devils which is spoken of in the New Testament; the *readers*, whose business it was to read the Scriptures in church; and the *doorkeepers*. All these were considered to belong to the clergy, just as if among ourselves the organist, the clerk, the sexton, the singers, and the bell-ringers of a church were to be reckoned among the clergy, and were to be appointed to their offices by a religious ceremony. But these new orders were not used everywhere, and, as has been said, the persons who were in these orders were not considered to belong to the clergy in the same way as those of the three higher orders which had come down from the days of the Apostles.

There were also, in the earliest times, women called *deaconesses*, such as Phœbe, who is mentioned in the Epistle to the Romans (xvi. 1). These deaconesses (who were often pious widows) were employed among Christians of their own sex for such works of mercy and instruction as were not fit for men to do (or, at least, were supposed not to be so according to the manners of the Greeks, and of the other ancient nations). But the order of deaconesses does not seem to have lasted long. It was a "minor order," and was not on a level with the Order of Deacons.

All bishops are of one order. But in course of time it was found convenient for the government of the Church that some of them should be placed higher than others, and the way in which this was settled was very natural. The bishops of a province found it desirable to meet sometimes that they might consult with each other, as we are told that the Apostles did at Jerusalem (Acts xv.), and in most countries these meetings (which were called *synods* or *councils*) came to be regularly held once or twice a year. The chief city of each province was naturally the place of meeting, and the bishop of this city was naturally the chairman or president of the assembly—just as we read that, in the council of the Apostles, St. James,

who was bishop of Jerusalem, where it was held, spoke with the greatest authority, after all the rest, and that his "sentence" was given as the judgment of the assembly. These bishops, then, got the title of *metropolitans,* because each was bishop of the *metropolis* (or *mother-city*) of the province in which the council was held, and thus they came to be considered higher than their brethren. And, of course, when any messages or letters were to be sent to the churches of other countries, the metropolitan was the person in whose name it was done.

And, as all this was the natural course of things in every country, it was also natural that the bishops of very great cities should be considered as still higher than the ordinary metropolitans. Thus the bishoprics of Rome, Alexandria, and Antioch, which were the three greatest cities of the empire, were regarded as the chief bishoprics, and as superior to all others. Those of Rome and Antioch were both supposed to have been founded by St. Peter, and that of Alexandria was believed to have been founded by St. Mark, under the direction of St. Peter. Hence it afterwards came to be thought that this was the cause of their greatness, and the bishops of Rome, especially, liked to have this believed, because they could then pretend to claim some sort of especial power, which they said that our Lord had given to St. Peter above the other Apostles, and that St. Peter had left to his successors. But such claims were quite unfounded, and it is clear that the main reason why these three churches stood higher than others was that they were in the three greatest cities of the whole empire.

But the Church of Rome had many advantages over Alexandria and Antioch, as well as over every other. It was the greatest and the richest of all, so that it could send help to distressed Christians in all countries. No other church of the West had an Apostle to boast of, but Rome could boast of the two

great Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul, who had laboured in it, and had given their blood for the faith in the Gospel in it. Most of the western Christians had received their knowledge of the Gospel through the Roman Church, and on this account they looked up with respect to it as a mother. And as people from all parts of the empire were continually going to Rome and returning, the church of the great capital kept up a constant intercourse with other churches in all quarters. Thus the bishops of Rome were naturally much respected everywhere, and, so long as they did not take too much upon themselves, great regard was paid to their opinion; but when they tried to interfere with the rights of other bishops, or to lord it over other churches, they were firmly withstood, and were desired to keep within their proper bounds, as Stephen of Rome was by St Cyprian of Carthage (p. 33).

Another thing must be mentioned as creditable to the Roman Church, and as one which did much to raise the power of its bishops. All the heresies of which we have read began in the East, where the people were more sharp-witted and restless in their thoughts than those of the West. The Romans, on the other hand, had not the turn of mind which led to these errors, but rather attended to practical things. Hence they were disposed to hold to the faith which had come down to them from their fathers, and to defend it against the new opinions which were brought forward from time to time. This steadiness, then, gave them a great advantage over the Christians of the East, who were frequently changing from one thing to another. It gained for the Roman Church much credit and authority, and when the Arian controversy arose, the effects of the difference between the Greek and the Latin character were vastly increased. The Romans (except for a short time, when a bishop named Liberius signed, under pressure, an Arian creed) kept to their old faith. The eastern Christians looked to the

bishop of Rome as if he had the whole western part of the Church in his hands. They constantly carried their quarrels to him, asking him to give his help, and he was the strongest friend that they could find anywhere. And when the side which Rome had always upheld got the victory at last, the importance of the Roman bishops rose in consequence. But even after all this, if the bishop of Rome tried to meddle with other churches, his right to do so was still denied. Many canons—that is to say, *laws of the Church*—were made to forbid the carrying of any quarrel for judgment beyond the country in which it began.

And from the time when Constantinople was built in the place of Byzantium, a new great church arose. Byzantium had been only an ordinary bishopric, and for a time Constantinople was not called anything more than an ordinary bishopric, but in real importance it was very much more, so that even a bishop of Antioch, the third see in the whole Christian world, thought himself advanced when he was made bishop of Constantinople instead. But the General Council —which, as we have seen (p. 80) was held at Constantinople in the year 381—made a canon by which Constantinople was placed next to Rome, "because," as the canon said, "it is a new Rome." This raised the jealousy, not only of Antioch, and still more of Alexandria, at having an upstart bishopric (as they considered it) put over their heads; but it gave great offence to the bishops of Rome, who could not bear such a rivalry as was now threatened, and were, besides, very angry on account of the reason which was given for placing Constantinople next after Rome. For the council, when it said that Constantinople was to be second among all Churches, because of its being "a new Rome," meant to say that the reason why Rome itself stood first was nothing more than its being the old capital of the empire, whereas the bishops of Rome wished it to be thought that their

power was founded on their being the successors of St. Peter.

We shall by-and-by see something of the effects of these jealousies.

CHAPTER XVIII

CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

Part I

In the early days of the Gospel, while the Christians were generally poor, and when they were obliged to meet in fear of the heathen, their worship was held in private houses, and sometimes in burial-places underground. But after a time buildings were expressly set apart for worship. In the years between the death of Valerian and the last persecution (A.D. 261-303), these churches were built with more beauty than before, and were furnished with gold and silver plate and other rich ornaments. And after the conversion of Constantine they became still finer and costlier. The clergy then wore rich vestments at service, the music was less simple, and the ceremonies were multiplied. Some of the old heathen temples were turned into churches; but most temples were not built in a shape suitable for Christian worship, and the pattern of the new churches was taken from the halls of justice, called *Basilicas*, which were to be found in every large town. These buildings were of an oblong shape, with a broad middle part, and on each side of it an aisle, separated from it by a row of pillars. This lower part of the basilica was used by merchants who met to talk about their business, and by all sorts of loungers who met to tell and hear the news. But at the upper end of the oblong there was a half circle, with its floor raised

above the level of the rest, and in the middle of this part of the judge of the city sat. Now, if you will compare this description with the plan of a church, you will see that the broad middle part of the basilica answers to what is called the *body* or *nave* of the church; that the side *aisles* are alike in each; and that the further part of the basilica, with its raised floor, answers to the *chancel* of a church; while the *holy table*, or *altar*, stands in the place answering to the judge's seat in the basilica. Some of these halls were given up by the emperors to be turned into churches, and the plan of them was found convenient as a pattern in the building of new churches.

On entering a church, the first part was the *porch*, in which there were places for the catechumens (that is to say, those who were preparing for baptism), for those who were possessed with devils, and who were under the care of the *exorcists* (see p. 90), and for the lowest kinds of those who were undergoing penance. Beyond this porch were the *beautiful gates*, which opened into the *nave* of the church. Just within these gates were those penitents whose time of penance was nearly ended, and the rest of the nave was the place for the *faithful*—that is to say, for those who were admitted to all the privileges of Christians. At the upper end of the nave, a place called the *choir* was railed off for the singers, and then, last of all, came the raised part or chancel, which has been spoken of. This was called the *sanctuary*, and was set apart for the clergy only. The women sat in church apart from the men; sometimes they were in the aisles, and sometimes in galleries. Churches generally had a court in front of them, or about them, in which were the lodgings of the clergy, and a building for the administration of baptism, called the *baptistery*.

The primitive Christians did not adorn their buildings with pictures or statues, for they eschewed all such ornaments, lest they should fall into idolatry

like the heathen. No such things as images or pictures of our Lord, or of His saints, were known among them; and in their everyday life, instead of the figures of gods, with which the heathens used to adorn their houses, their furniture, their cups, and their seals, the Christians made use of emblems only. Thus, instead of attempting a likeness of our Lord's human form, they made a figure of a shepherd carrying a lamb on his shoulders, to signify the Good Shepherd who gave His life for His sheep (St. John x. 11). Other ornaments of the same kind were: a *dove,* signifying the Holy Ghost; a *ship,* signifying the Church, the ark of salvation, sailing towards heaven; a *fish,* which was meant to remind them of their having been born again in the water, at their baptism; a musical instrument called a *lyre,* to signify Christian joy; and an *anchor,* the figure of Christian hope. About the year 300, the Council of Elvira, in Spain, made a canon forbidding pictures in church, which shows that the practice had then begun, and was growing; and also that in Spain, at least, it was thought to be dangerous. And a hundred years later, Epiphanius, a famous bishop of Salamis, in the Island of Cyprus, tore a curtain which he found hanging in a church, with a figure of our Lord, or of some saint, painted on it. He declared that such things were altogether unlawful, and desired that the curtain might be used to bury some poor man in, promising to send the church a plain one instead of it.

Christians used to sign themselves with the sign of of the cross on many occasions, and figures of the cross were early set up in churches. But crucifixes were not known until hundreds of years after the time of which we are now speaking.

Part II

The church service of Christians was always the same as to its main parts, although there were little

differences as to order and the like. Justin Martyr, who lived (as we have seen) about the middle of the second century, describes the service as it was in his time. It began, he says, with readings from the Scriptures, then followed a discourse by the bishop, or his representative, and there was much singing, of which a part was from the Old Testament psalms, while a part was made up of Christian hymns. The discourses of the clergy were generally meant to explain the Scripture lessons which had been read. At first these discourses were very plain, and as much as possible like ordinary talk, and from this they got the name of *homilies,* which properly meant nothing more than *conversations.* But by degrees they grew to be more like speeches, and people used to flock to them, just as many do now, from a wish to hear something fine, rather than with any notion of taking the preacher's words to heart, and trying to be made better by them. And in the fourth century, when anyone preached eloquently, the people used to cheer him on by clapping their hands, waving their handkerchiefs, and shouting out, "Orthodox!" "Thirteenth apostle!" or other such cries. Good men, of course, did not like to be treated in this way, as if they were actors at a theatre; and we often find St. Chrysostom and St. Augustine (of both of whom you will hear by-and-by) objecting to it in their sermons, and begging their hearers not to show their admiration in such foolish and unseemly ways. But it seems that the people went on with it, nevertheless; and no doubt there must have been some preachers who were vain enough and silly enough to be pleased with it.

In the time of the Apostles the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist appears to have been celebrated in the evening, as it had been by our blessed Lord Himself on the night in which He was betrayed. Thus it was, for instance, when the disciples at Troas "came together upon the first day of the week (Sunday) to

break bread" (that is, to celebrate the Holy Eucharist), and "Paul preached unto them, and continued his speech until midnight" (Acts xx. 7), though it is not clear whether the actual Eucharist was in the evening or in the early morning. In the service for this sacrament there was a thanksgiving to God for His bounty in bestowing the fruits of the earth. The congregation offered gifts of bread and wine, and from these the elements which were to be consecrated were taken. They also brought gifts of money, which was used for the relief of the poor, for the support of the clergy, and for other religious purposes. Either before or after the sacrament, there was a meal called the *Love-feast*, for which all the members of the congregation brought provisions, according as they could afford. All of them sat down to it as equals, in token of their being alike in Christ's brotherhood, and it ended with psalm-singing and prayer. But even in very early days (as St. Paul shows us in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, xi. 21, 22) there was grave misbehaviour at these meals; and besides this, such religious feasts gave the heathen an excuse for their stories that the Christians met to feed on human flesh and to commit other abominations in secret. For these reasons, after a time, the love-feast was separated from the Holy Communion, and at length it was entirely given up. A relic of it remains in the *pain béni* distributed after Mass in French churches. There is a similar custom in the Eastern churches called the *antidoron*.

In the second century, the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, instead of being in the evening as formerly, was held in the morning; and by then a difference was made between the two parts of the service. At the earlier part of it the catechumens and penitents might be present, but when the Communion office was going to begin, a deacon called out: "Let no one of the catechumens or of the hearers stay." After this none

were allowed to remain except those who were entitled to communicate, which all baptized Christians did every Sunday, unless they were shut out from the Church on account of their misdeeds. The "breaking of bread" in the Lord's Supper was at first daily, as we know from the early chapters of the Acts (ii. 46), but this practice does not seem to have been universal, and it became usual to celebrate the Holy Communion only on the Lord's Day and on certain days in the week. When Christianity became the religion of the empire, and there was now no fear of persecution, the earlier part of the service was open not only to catechumens and penitents, but to Jews and heathens; and in the fifth century, when the Church was mostly made up of persons who had been baptized and trained in Christianity from their infancy, the distinction between the "service of the catechumens" and the "service of the faithful" ceased to be of practical importance except in missions to the heathen. The Holy Eucharist was always and everywhere the principal service, which all Christians, not being excommunicated, were bound to attend every Sunday. Gradually, as the moral standard became lower, people ceased to communicate every week. But no other service ever took the place of the Eucharist as the principal act of worship for all.

The length of time during which converts were obliged to be catechumens before being admitted to baptism differed in different parts of the Church. In some places it was two years, in some three years; but if during this time they fell sick and appeared to be in danger of death, they were baptized without waiting any longer.

At baptism, those who received it professed their faith, or their sponsors did so for them, and from this began the use of *creeds*, containing, in few words, the chief articles of the Christian faith. The sign of the cross was made over those who were baptized, "in

token that they should not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under His banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldiers and servants unto their life's end." The kiss of peace was given to them in token of their being taken into spiritual brotherhood; white robes were put on them, to signify their cleansing from sin; and a mixture of milk and honey was administered to them, as if to give them a foretaste of their heavenly inheritance, of which the earthly Canaan, "flowing with milk and honey" (Exod. iii. 8, etc.), had been a figure. Other ceremonies were added in the fourth century, such as the use of salt and lights, and an anointing with oil in token of their being "made kings and priests to God" (Rev. i. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 5-9), besides the anointing with a mixture called *chrism* at confirmation, which had been practised in earlier times.

The usual time of baptism was the season from Easter eve to Whitsuntide, but in case of danger, persons might be baptized at any time.

Part III

During the fourth century there was a growth of superstitions and corruptions in the Church. Great numbers of converts came into it, bringing their old heathen notions with them, and not knowing clearly what they might expect, but with an eager desire to find as much to interest them in the worship and life of Christians as they had found in the ceremonies and shows of their former religion. And in order that such converts might not be altogether disappointed, the Christian teachers of the age allowed a number of things which soon began to have very bad effects; thus, as we are told in the preface to the Book of Common Prayer, St. Augustine complained that in his time (which was about the year 400) ceremonies

"were grown to such a number that the estate of Christian people was in worse case concerning that matter than were the Jews." Among the new practices which were now growing, although they did not come to a head until afterwards, one was a great increase of reverence for saints, which led to the practice of making addresses to them, and of paying excessive honours to their dead bodies. Another was the fashion of going on pilgrimage to the Holy Land, in which Constantine's mother, Helena, set an example which was soon followed by thousands, who not only fancied that the sight of the places hallowed by the great events of Scripture would kindle or heighten their devotion, but that prayers would be especially pleasing to God if they were offered up in such places. And thus great numbers flocked to Palestine from all quarters, and even from Britain; and on their return they carried back with them water from the Jordan, earth from the Redeemer's sepulchre, or what they believed to be chips of the true cross, which was supposed to have been found during Helena's visit to Jerusalem. The mischiefs of this fashion soon showed themselves. St. Basil's brother, Gregory of Nyssa, wrote a little book expressly for the purpose of persuading people not to go on pilgrimage. He said that he himself had been neither better nor worse for a visit which he had paid to the Holy Land; but that such a pilgrimage might even be dangerous for others, because the inhabitants of the country were so vicious that there was more likelihood of getting harm from them than good from the sight of the holy places. "We should rather try," he said, "to go out of the body than to drag it about from place to place." Another very learned man of the same time, St. Jerome, although he had taken up his own abode at Bethlehem, saw so much of the evils which arose from pilgrimages that he gave very earnest warnings against them. "It is no praise," he says, "to have

been at Jerusalem, but to have lived religiously at Jerusalem. The sight of the places where our Lord died and rose again are profitable to those who bear their own cross and daily rise again with Him. But for those who say: 'The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord' (Jer. vii. 4), let them hear the Apostle's words, 'Ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you' (1 Cor. iii. 16). The court of heaven is open to approach from Jerusalem and from Britain alike, 'for the kingdom of God is within you'" (St. Luke xvii. 21).

CHAPTER XIX

ARCADIUS AND HONORIUS

(A.D. 395–423)

THE great emperor Theodosius was succeeded in 395 by his two sons, Arcadius, who was eighteen years of age, and Honorius, who was only eleven. Arcadius had the East, and Honorius the West, and after this division the empire was never again united in anything like the full extent of its old greatness. The reigns of these princes were full of misfortunes, especially in the western empire, where swarms of barbarians poured down from the north, and did a vast deal of mischief. Most of these barbarian tribes were Teutons, and were akin by race and language to the Germans and English. One of them, the Goths (see p. 79), whose king was named Alaric, thrice besieged Rome itself. The first time, Alaric was bought off by a large sum of money. After the second siege, he set up an emperor of his own making; and after the third siege, the city was given up to his soldiers for plunder. Rude as these Goths were, they had been brought over to a kind of Christianity, although it

was not the true faith of the Church. There had, indeed, been Christians among the Goths nearly 150 years before this time, for many of them had been converted by Christian captives, whom they carried off in the reigns of Valerian and Gallienus, about the year 260; and a Gothic bishop, named Theophilus, had sat at the Council of Nicæa. But great changes had since been wrought among them by a remarkable man named Ulfilas, who was consecrated as their bishop in the year 348. He found that they did not know the use of letters, so he made an alphabet, and translated the Scriptures into their language (except the Books of Kings, for he said they were too warlike already, and ought not to read about wars in the Bible), and he taught them many useful arts. Thus he won such an influence over them, that they received all his words as law, and he was called "the Moses of the Goths." But, unhappily, Ulfilas had been trained by Arians, and this was the doctrine which he taught to his people, instead of the sound faith which had before been preached to them by Theophilus and others. But still, although their Christianity was not of the right kind, it had good effects on these fierce warriors; and so it appeared when Rome was given over by the conqueror Alaric to his soldiers. Although they destroyed temples, they paid great respect to churches; and they did not commit such terrible acts of cruelty and violence as had been usual when cities were taken by heathen armies.

We must not forget what was done by a monk, named Telemachus, in the reign of Honorius. In the year 403, one of the emperor's generals defeated Alaric in the north of Italy; and the Romans, who in those days were not much used to victories, made the most of this one, and held great games in honour of it. Now, the public games of the Romans were generally of a cruel kind. We have seen how, in

former days, they used to let wild beasts loose against the Christian martyrs in their amphitheatres (p. 13); and another of their favourite pastimes was to set men who were called gladiators (that is, *swordsmen*) to fight and kill each other in those same places. The love of these shows of gladiators was so strong in the people of Rome that Constantine had not ventured to do away with them there, although he would not allow any such things in the new Christian capital which he built. And the custom of setting men to slaughter one another for the amusement of the lookers-on had lasted at Rome down to the time of Honorius.

Telemachus, then, who was an Eastern monk, was greatly shocked that Christians should take pleasure in these savage sports; and when he heard of the great games which were preparing, he resolved to bear his witness against them. For this purpose, therefore, he went all the way to Rome, and entered the amphitheatre, close to the *arena* (as the place where the gladiators fought was called); and when the fight had begun, he leaped over the barrier which separated him from the arena, rushed in between the gladiators, and tried to part them. The people who crowded the vast building grew furious at being baulked of their amusement; they shouted out with rage, and threw stones, or whatever else they could lay their hands on, at Telemachus, so that he was soon pelted to death. But when they saw him lying dead, their anger suddenly cooled, and they were struck with horror at the crime of which they had been guilty, although they had never thought of the wickedness of feasting their eyes on the bloodshed of gladiators. The emperor said that the death of Telemachus was really a martyrdom, and proposed to do away with the shows of gladiators; and the people, who were now filled with sorrow and shame, agreed to give up their cruel diversions. So the life of the brave monk was not thrown away, since it was the

means of saving the lives of many, and of preserving multitudes from the sin of sacrificing their fellow-men for their sport.

CHAPTER XX

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

(A.D. 347–407)

Part I

At this time lived St. John Chrysostom, whose name is well known from the prayer in Morning and Evening Prayer called "A Prayer of St. Chrysostom," taken from the Greek Liturgy which bears his name.

He was born at Antioch about 347. While he was still a little child, he lost his father; but his mother, Anthusa, who was left a widow at the age of twenty, did not marry again, but devoted herself to the training of her son. During his early years, she brought him up with religious care, and he was afterwards sent to finish his education under a famous heathen philosopher. As has been already said, Christian youths, while in the schools of such teachers, ran a great risk of being turned from the Gospel, and many of them fell away (p. 76); but John was preserved from danger by daily studying the Scriptures, and thus his faith was kept fresh and warm. The philosopher had such a high notion of his talents, that he long after spoke of John as the best of all the pupils he had ever had, and said that he would have been the worthiest to succeed him as a teacher, "if the Christians had not stolen him."

When he left this master, John studied law; but, after trying it for a time, he found that there were things about the business of a lawyer in Antioch which went against his conscience; so he resolved to

give up the law, and to become a monk. But his mother thought that he might lead a really Christian life without rushing away into the wilderness and leaving his natural duties behind him. She took him by the hand, led him into her chamber, and made him sit down beside her on the bed. Then she burst into tears; she reminded him of all the kindness which she had shown him, and of the cares and troubles which she had borne for his sake. She told him that it had been her chief comfort to look on his face, which put her in mind of the husband whom she had lost. "Make me not once more a widow," she said; "wait only for my death, which may, perhaps, not be far off. When you have laid me in the grave, then you may go where you will—even beyond the sea, if such be your wish—but so long as I live, bear to stay with me, and do not offend God by afflicting your mother." The young man yielded to these entreaties, and remained in his mother's house, although he gave up all worldly business, and lived after the strict manner of the monks. But when Anthusa was dead, he withdrew to the mountains, near Antioch, in which a great number of monks dwelt. There he spent four years in a monastery, and two as a hermit in a cave. But at last his hard life made him very weak and ill, so that he was obliged to return to Antioch; and soon after this he was ordained to be one of the clergy, and was appointed chief preacher of the city (A.D. 386).

Of all the great men of the ancient Church, John was the most famous for eloquence; and from this it was that he got the name of *Chrysostom,* which means *golden-mouthed,* though it appears only to have been given him after his death. His sermons (of which hundreds still remain) were not mere displays of fine words, but were always meant to instruct and to improve those who heard them. And, while he was chief preacher at Antioch, he had a very remarkable

opportunity of using his gifts of speech. An outbreak had taken place in the city, on account of a new tax which Theodosius, who was then emperor, had laid on the people (A.D. 387). The statues of the emperor and of his family, which stood in public places, were thrown down, and were dragged about the streets with all sorts of mockery and insult. But the riot was easily put down, and then the inhabitants began to be in great anxiety and terror as to the punishment which Theodosius might inflict on them. For although the frightful massacre of Thessalonica (p. 85) had not at that time taken place, they knew that the emperor was not to be trifled with, and that his fits of anger were terrible. They expected that they would be given up to slaughter, and their city to destruction. For a time, few of them ventured out of their houses; and those few slunk along the streets as if they were afraid of being seized. Many were imprisoned, and were cruelly tortured or put to death; others ran away, leaving all that they had behind them; and the public amusements, of which the people of Antioch were excessively fond, were, for a time, quite given up.

The bishop, Flavian, who was a very aged man, in bad health, and infirm, left the bedside of his sister (who was supposed to be dying) to set out for Constantinople and implore the emperor's mercy. And while he was absent Chrysostom took the lead among the clergy. He preached every day in a solemn and awakening tone; he tried to turn the terrors of the people to their lasting good, by directing their thoughts to the great judgment, in which all men must hereafter appear, and urging them, whatever their present fate might be, to strive after peace with God, and a share in His mercy, through Christ, in that awful day. The effect of this preaching was wonderful; day after day vast crowds flocked to listen to it, forgetting everything else; even many heathen were among them.

The news of the disturbances at Antioch had reached Constantinople long before Flavian; and the bishop, as he was on his way, met two commissioners, who had been sent by the emperor to declare his sentence to the people. The buildings of the city were to be spared; but it was to lose its rank among the cities of the empire. The baths, which in those countries were reckoned almost as a necessary of life, were to be shut up, and all public amusements were to be at an end. The officers, after reaching Antioch, and publishing this sentence, set about inquiring who had taken a part in the tumult. Judgment was to be executed without mercy on all whose guilt could be proved; and the anxiety of the people became extreme. A number of monks and hermits came down from the mountains, and busied themselves in trying to comfort those who were in distress. One of these monks, Macedonius, a man of rough and simple appearance, but of great note for holiness, met the emperor's commissioners as they were riding through the market-place; whereupon he laid hold of one of them by the cloak, and desired them both to dismount. At first they were angry; but, on being told who he was, they alighted and fell on their knees before him; for, in those days, monks famous for their holiness were looked on much as if they had been prophets. And Macedonius spoke to them in the tone of a prophet: "Go," he said, "say to the emperor, 'You are a man; your subjects, too, are men, made in the image of God. You are enraged on account of images of brass; but a living and reasonable image is of far higher worth than these. Destroy the brazen images, and it is easy to make others; but you cannot restore a single hair of the heads of the men whom you have put to death.'" The commissioners were much struck with the way in which Macedonius uttered this, although they did not understand what he said (as he spoke in the Syrian language); and

when his words were explained to them in Greek, they agreed that one of them should go to the emperor, to tell him how things were at Antioch, and to beg for further instructions.

In the meantime, Bishop Flavian had made his way to the emperor's presence. Theodosius received him with kindness, and spoke calmly of the favour which he had always shown to Antioch, and of the base return which the citizens had made for it. The bishop wept bitterly when he heard this. He owned that his flock had deserved the worst of punishments; but, he said, no punishment could be so severe as undeserved mercy. He told the emperor that, instead of the statues which had been thrown down, he had now the opportunity of setting up far better monuments in the hearts of his people, by showing them forgiveness. He urged the duty of forgiveness in all the ways that he could think of; he drew a moving picture of the misery of the inhabitants of Antioch, which he could not bear to see again; and he declared that, unless he gained the favour which he had come to beg for, he would never return to his city.

Theodosius was moved almost to tears by the old man's words. "What wonder is it," he said, "if I, who am but a man, should pardon my fellow-men, when the Maker of the world has come on earth, and has submitted to death, for the forgiveness of mankind?" and he pressed Flavian to return to Antioch with all speed, for the comfort of his people. The bishop, on reaching home, found that his sister, whom he had not expected to see any more in this world, had recovered; and his flock were full of gratitude to him for what he had done. But he refused all thanks or credit on account of the success of his mission. "It was not my doing," he said, "it was God who softened the emperor's heart."

Part II

When Chrysostom had been the chief preacher in Antioch about twelve years, the bishopric of Constantinople fell vacant (A.D. 397), and there was so much strife for it, that at length the people, as the only way of settling the matter quietly, begged the emperor Arcadius to name a bishop for them. Now, it happened that the emperor's favourite counsellor, Eutropius, had been at Antioch a short time before, and had been very much struck with Chrysostom's preaching; so he advised the emperor to choose him. Chrysostom was appointed accordingly; and, as he was so much beloved by the people of Antioch that they might perhaps have made a disturbance rather than part with him, he was decoyed outside the city, and was then secretly sent off to Constantinople.

The new bishop's preaching was as much admired at Constantinople as it had been at Antioch, and he soon gained great influence among his flock. And besides attending diligently to his work at home, he set on foot missions to some heathen nations, and also to the Goths, who, as we have seen (p. 104), were Arians. But besides the Goths at a distance, there was then a great number of the same people at Constantinople; for the Greeks and Romans of those days were so much fallen away from the bravery of their forefathers, that the emperors were obliged to hire Gothic soldiers to defend their dominions. Chrysostom, therefore, took great pains to bring over these Goths at Constantinople to the Church. He ordained clergy of their own nation for them, and set apart a church for them. And he often went himself to this church, and preached to them in Greek, while an interpreter repeated his words to them in their own language.

But unhappily he soon made enemies at Con-

stantinople. For he found the church there in a very bad state, and, in trying to set things right, he gave offence to many people of various kinds; and, although he was indeed an excellent man, perhaps he did not always act with such wisdom and such calmness of temper as might have been wished. The last bishop, Nectarius, had been a man of high rank, who had never dreamt of being a bishop, until, at the Council of Constantinople, he was suddenly chosen instead of Gregory of Nazianzus (see p. 80). At that time Nectarius was not even baptized; so that he had first to receive baptism, and then, within a week, he was consecrated as bishop of the second church in the whole Christian world. And it proved that he was too old to change his ways very much. He continued to live in a costly style, as he had done all his life before; and he let the clergy go on much as they pleased, so that they generally fell into easy and luxurious habits, and some of them were even quite scandalous in their conduct. Now, Chrysostom's ways and notions were quite opposite to all this. He sold the rich carpets and other valuable furniture which he found in the bishop's palace; nay, he even sold some of the church ornaments, that he might get money for building hospitals and for other charitable purposes. He did not care for company, and his health was delicate; and for these reasons he always took his meals by himself, and did not ask bishops who came to Constantinople to lodge in his palace or to dine with him, as Nectarius had done. This does not seem to be quite according to St. Paul's saying, that a bishop should be "given to hospitality" (1 Tim. iii. 2); but Chrysostom thought that among the Christians of a great city like Constantinople the strange bishops could be at no loss for entertainment, and that his own time and money might be better spent than in entertaining them. But many of them were very much offended, and it is said that one, Acacius, of Berrhœa,

in Syria, declared in anger: "I will cook his pot for him!"

Chrysostom's reforms also interfered much with the habits of his clergy. He made them perform service at night in their churches for people who were too busy to attend during the day, and many of them were very unwilling to leave their homes at late hours and to do additional work. Some of them, too, were envious of him because he was so famous as a preacher, and they looked eagerly to find something in his sermons which might be turned against him. And besides all these enemies among the clergy, he provoked many among the courtiers and the rich people of Constantinople, by plainly attacking their vices.

Although Chrysostom had chiefly owed his bishopric to Eutropius, he was afterwards drawn into many disputes with him. For in that age and in that country a person in power, such as Eutropius, might commit great acts of tyranny and oppression, while the poor people who suffered had no means of redress. But many of those whom Eutropius meant to plunder or to imprison took refuge in churches, where debtors and others were then considered to be safe, as it was not lawful to seize them in the holy buildings. Eutropius persuaded the emperor to make a law by which this right of shelter (or *asylum,* as it was called) was taken away from the churches. But soon afterwards he himself fell into disgrace, and in his terror he rushed to the cathedral, and laid hold of the altar for protection. Some soldiers were sent to seize him, but Chrysostom would not let them enter, and next day, when the church was crowded by a multitude of people who had flocked to see what would become of Eutropius, the bishop preached on the uncertainty of all earthly greatness. While Eutropius lay crouching under the holy table, Chrysostom turned to him and reminded him how he had tried to take away that

very privilege of churches from which he was now seeking protection, and he desired the people to beg both God and the emperor to pardon the fallen favourite. By all this he did not mean to insult the wretched Eutropius, but to turn the rage of the multitude into pity. It was said, however, by some that he had triumphed over his enemy's misfortunes, and he also got into trouble for giving Eutropius shelter, and was carried before the emperor to answer for doing so. But the bishop boldly upheld the right of the Church to protect the defenceless, and Eutropius was, for the time, allowed to go free.

Part III

Thus there were many at Constantinople who were ready to take part against Chrysostom, if an opportunity should offer, and it was not long before they found one.

The bishop of Alexandria at this time was a bold and ambitious man, named Theophilus. He was jealous of the see of Constantinople; he disliked the bishop because he had hoped to put one of his own clergy into the place, and had seen enough of Chrysostom at his first meeting to know that he could not make a tool of him; and although he had been obliged by the emperor and Eutropius to consecrate Chrysostom as bishop, it was with a very bad grace that he did so.

There were then great quarrels as to the opinions of the famous Origen, who had lived two hundred years before (see Chap. VII.). Some of his opinions were really wrong, and others were very strange, if they were not wrong too. But besides these, a number of charges had been laid against him of which he seems to have been quite innocent. If Theophilus really cared at all about the matter, he was in his heart favourable to Origen. But he found it convenient to take the opposite side, and he cruelly persecuted such

of the Egyptian monks as were said to be touched with Origen's errors. The chief of these monks were four brothers, called the *long* or *tall brothers*. One of them was that same Ammonius who cut off his ear and was ready to cut out his tongue rather than be a bishop (see p. 73). Theophilus had made much of these brothers, and had employed two of them in managing his accounts. But these two found out such practices of his in money matters as quite shocked them, and as, after this, they refused to stay with the bishop any longer, he charged them and their brothers with Origenism (as the following of Origen's opinions was called). They denied that they held any of the errors which Theophilus laid to their charge; but he went with soldiers into the desert, hunted out the brothers, destroyed their cells, burnt a number of books, and even killed some persons. The tall brothers and some of their friends fled into the Holy Land, but their enemy had power enough to prevent their remaining there, and they then sought a refuge at Constantinople.

On hearing of their arrival in his city, Chrysostom inquired about them, and, finding that they bore a good character, he treated them kindly; but he would not admit them to Communion until he knew what Theophilus had to say against them. Theophilus, however, was told that Chrysostom *had* admitted them, and he wrote a furious letter to him about it. The brothers were very much alarmed lest they should be excluded from Communion at Constantinople, as they had been in the Holy Land; and one day when the empress Eudoxia was in a church, they went to her and entreated her to get the emperor's leave that a council might be held to examine their case.

Theophilus was summoned to appear before this council, and explain his behaviour to the brothers, but when he got to Constantinople he acted as if, instead of being himself an accused person, he had been

called to judge the bishop of the capital. He would have nothing to do with Chrysostom. He spent large sums of money in bribing courtiers and others to favour his own side; and, when he thought he had made all sure, he held a meeting of six-and-thirty bishops, at a place called the Oak, which lay on the Asiatic shore, opposite to Constantinople (A.D. 403). A number of trumpery charges were brought against Chrysostom, and, as he refused to appear before such a meeting, which was almost entirely made up of Egyptian bishops, and had no right whatever to try him, they found him guilty of various offences, and, among the rest, of high treason! The emperor and empress had been drawn into taking part against him, and he was condemned to banishment. But on the night after he had been sent across the Bosphorus (the strait which divides Constantinople from the Asiatic shore) the city was shaken by an earthquake. The empress, in her terror, supposed this to be a judgment against the injustice which had been committed, and hastily sent off a messenger to beg that the bishop would return. And when it was known next day that he was on his way back, so great was the joy of his flock that the Bosphorus was covered with vessels, carrying vast multitudes of people, who eagerly crowded to welcome him.

PART IV

Within a few months after his return, Chrysostom again got into trouble for finding fault with some disorderly and almost heathenish rejoicings which were held around a new statue of the empress, close to the door of his cathedral. Theophilus had returned to Egypt, and did not again appear at Constantinople, but directed the proceedings of Chrysostom's other enemies who were on the spot. Another council was held, and, of course, found the bishop guilty of whatever was laid to his charge. He did not mean to desert

his flock, unless he were forced to do so. He therefore kept possession of the cathedral and of the episcopal house for some months. During this time he was often disturbed by his enemies; nay, more than once, attempts were even made to murder him. At last, on receiving an order from the emperor to leave his house, he saw that the time was come when he must yield to force. His flock guarded the cathedral day and night, and would have resisted any attempt to seize him; but he did not think it right to risk disorder and bloodshed. He, therefore, took a solemn leave of his chief friends, giving good advice and speaking words of comfort to each. He begged them not to despair for the loss of him, but to submit to any bishop who should be chosen by general consent to succeed him. And then, while—in order to take off the people's attention—his mule was held at one door of the church, as if he might be expected to come out there, he quietly left the building by another door and gave himself up as a prisoner, declaring that he wished his case to be fairly tried by a council (A.D. 404).

He was first carried to Nicæa, where he remained nearly a month. During this time he pressed for a fresh inquiry into his conduct, but in vain; and neither he nor his friends could obtain leave for him to retire to some place where he might live with comfort. He was sentenced to be carried to Cucusus, among the mountains of Taurus—a name which seemed to bode him no good, as an earlier bishop of Constantinople, Paul, had been starved and afterwards strangled there, in the time of the Arian troubles (A.D. 351).

On his way to Cucusus, he was often in danger from robbers, who infested the road, and still more from monks of the opposite party, who were furious against him. When he arrived at the place, he found it a wretched little town, where he was frozen by cold

in winter and parched by excessive heat in summer. Sometimes he could hardly get provisions, and when he was ill (as often happened) he could not get proper medicines. Sometimes, too, the robbers, from the neighbouring country of Isauria, made plundering attacks, so that Chrysostom was obliged to leave Cucusus in haste, and to take refuge in a castle called Arabissus.

But, although there was much to distress him in his banishment, there was also much to comfort him. His great name, his sufferings, and his innocence were known throughout all Christian churches. Letters of consolation and sympathy poured in on him from all quarters. The bishop of Rome himself wrote to him as to an equal, and even the emperor of the West, Honorius, interceded for him, although without success. The bishop of Cucusus, and his other neighbours, treated him with all respect and kindness, and many pilgrims made their way over the rough mountain roads to see him and to express their reverence for him. His friends at a distance sent him such large sums of money that he was able to redeem captives and to support missions to the Goths and to the Persians, and, after all, had to desire that they would not send him so much, as their gifts were more than he could use. In truth, no part of his life was so full of honour and of influence as the three years which he spent in exile.

At length the court became jealous of the interest which was so generally felt in Chrysostom, and he was suddenly hurried off from Cucusus, with the intention of removing him to a still wilder and more desolate place at the farthest border of the empire. He had to travel rapidly in the height of summer, and the great heat renewed the ailments from which he had often suffered. At length he became so ill that he felt his end to be near, and desired the soldiers who had the charge of him to stop at a town called

Comana.[1] There he exchanged his mean travelling dress for the best which he possessed; he once more received the sacrament of his Saviour's body and blood, and, after uttering the words "Glory be to God for all things," with his last breath he added "Amen!" (September 14, 407).

Thirty years after this, Chrysostom's body was removed to Constantinople. When the vessel which conveyed it was seen leaving the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus, a multitude, far greater than that which had hailed his first return from banishment, poured forth from Constantinople in ships and boats of all kinds, which covered the narrow strait. And the emperor, Theodosius II., son of Arcadius and Eudoxia, bent humbly over the coffin and lamented with tears the guilt of his parents in the persecution of the great and holy bishop.

CHAPTER XXI

ST. AUGUSTINE

(A.D. 354–430)

PART I

THE Church in the north of Africa has hardly been mentioned since the time of St. Cyprian (Chap. VIII.). But we must now look towards it again, since in the days of St. Chrysostom it produced a man who was perhaps the greatest of all the Christian Fathers—St. Augustine.

Augustine was born at Thagaste, a city of Numidia, in the year 354. His mother, St. Monnica, was a pious Christian, but his father, Patricius, was a heathen and a man of no very good character. Monnica was resolved to bring up her son in the

[1] More than fourteen centuries later, the great missionary, Henry Martyn, died at the same place, on October 6, 1812.

true faith; she entered him as a catechumen of the Church when a little child, and carefully taught him as much of religious things as a child could learn. But he was not then baptized, because—as has been mentioned already (p. 44)—people were accustomed in those days to put off baptism out of fear lest they should afterwards fall into sin, and so should lose the blessing of the sacrament. This, as we know, was a mistake, but it was a very common practice nevertheless.

When Augustine was a boy he was one day suddenly taken ill, so that he seemed likely to die. Remembering what his mother had taught him, he begged that he might be baptized, and preparations were made for the purpose; but all at once he began to grow better, and the baptism was put off for the same reason as before.

As he grew up, he gave but little promise of what he was afterwards to become. Much of his time was spent in idleness, and through idleness he fell into bad company and was drawn into sins of many kinds. When he was about seventeen, his father died. Monnica had been much troubled by her husband's heathenism and misconduct, and had earnestly tried to convert him from his errors. She went about this wisely, not lecturing him or arguing with him in a way that might have set him more against the Gospel, but trying rather to show him the beauty of Christian faith by her own loving, gentle, and dutiful behaviour. And at length her pains were rewarded by seeing him profess himself a believer and receive Christian baptism.

Monnica was left rather badly off at her husband's death. But a rich neighbour was kind enough to help her in the expense of finishing her son's education, and the young man himself now began to show something of the great talents which God had been pleased to bestow on him. Unhappily, however, he sank

deeper and deeper into vice, and poor Monnica was bitterly grieved by his ways. A book which he happened to read led him to feel something of the shamefulness and wretchedness of his courses; but, as it was a heathen book (although written by one of the wisest of the heathens, Cicero), it could not show him by what means he might be able to reach to a higher life. He looked into Scripture, in the hope of finding instruction there; but he was now in that state of mind to which, as St. Paul says (1 Cor. i. 23), the preaching of Christ sounds like "foolishness"; so that he fancied himself to be above learning anything from a book so plain and homely as the Bible then seemed to him, and he set out in search of some other teaching. And a very strange sort of teaching he met with.

About a hundred years before this time, a man named Manes appeared in Persia (A.D. 270), and preached a religion which he pretended to have received from heaven, but which was really made up by himself, from a mixture of Christian and heathen notions. It was something like the doctrines which had been before taught by the Gnostics (see p. 8), but was more closely connected with Zoroastrianism, the old religion of Persia. He taught that there were two gods—a good god of light, and a bad god of darkness. And he divided his followers into two classes, the lower of which were called *hearers*, while the higher were called *elect*. These elect were supposed to be very strict in their lives. They were not to eat flesh at all; they might not even gather the fruits of the earth, or pluck a herb with their own hands. They were supported and were served by the hearers, and they took a very odd way of showing their gratitude to these; for it is said that when one of the elect ate a piece of bread, he made this speech to it: "It was not I who reaped or ground or baked thee; may they who did so be reaped and ground and baked in their turn!" And it was believed that the poor hearers

would after death become corn, and have to go through the mill and the oven, until they should have suffered enough to clear away their offences and make them fit for the blessedness of the elect.

The Manichæans (as the followers of Manes were called) soon found their way into Africa, where they gained many converts; and, although laws were often made against their religion by the emperors, it continued to spread secretly; for they used to hide their opinions, when there was any danger, so that persons who were really Manichæans pretended to be Catholic Christians, and there were some of them even among the monks and clergy of the Church.

In the humour in which Augustine now was, this strange sect took his fancy; for the Manichæans pretended to be wiser than anyone else, and laughed at all submission to doctrines which had been settled by the Church. So Augustine at twenty became a Manichæan, and for nine years was one of the hearers, —for he never got to be one of the elect, or to know much about their secrets. But before he had been very long in the sect, he began to notice some things which shocked him in the behaviour of the elect, who professed the greatest strictness. In short, he could not but see that their strictness was all a pretence, and that they were really a very worthless set of men. And he found out, too, that, besides bad conduct, there was a great deal very bad and disgusting in the opinions of the Manichæans, which he had not known at first. After learning all this, he did not know what to turn to, and he seems for a time to have believed nothing at all, which is a wretched state of mind indeed, and so he found it.

Part II

Augustine now set up as a teacher at Carthage, the chief city of Africa; but among the students there he found a set of wild young men who called themselves

Eversors—a name which meant that they turned everything topsy-turvy—and Augustine was so much troubled by the behaviour of these unruly lads, that he resolved to leave Carthage and go to Rome. Monnica, as we may easily suppose, had been much distressed by his wanderings, but she never ceased to pray that he might be brought round again. One day she went to a learned bishop, who was much in the habit of arguing with people who were in error, and begged that he would speak to her son; but the good man understood Augustine's case, and saw that to talk to him while he was in such a state of mind would only make him more conceited than he was already. "Let him alone awhile," he said; "only pray God for him, and he will of himself find out by reading how wrong the Manichæans are, and how impious their doctrine is." And then he told her that he had himself been brought up as a Manichæan, but that his studies had shown him the error of the sect, and he had left it. Monnica was not satisfied with this, and went on begging, even with tears, that the bishop would talk with her son. But he said to her: "Go thy way, and may God bless thee; for it is not possible that the child of so many tears should perish." And Monnica took his words as if they had been a voice from heaven, and cherished the hope which they held out to her.

Monnica was much opposed to Augustine's plan of removing to Rome; but he slipped away and went on shipboard while she was praying in a chapel by the seaside, which was called after the name of St. Cyprian. Having got to Rome, he opened a school there, as he had done at Carthage; but he found that the Roman youth, although they were not so rough as those of Carthage, had another very awkward habit—namely, that after having heard a number of his lectures, they disappeared without paying for them. While he was in distress on this account, the office of

a public teacher at Milan was offered to him, and he was very glad to take it. While at Rome he had a bad illness; but he did not at that time wish or ask for baptism as he had done when sick in his childhood.

The great St. Ambrose was then bishop of Milan. Augustine had heard so much of his fame that he went often to hear him, out of curiosity to know whether the bishop were really as fine a preacher as he was said to be; but by degrees, as he listened, he felt a greater and greater interest. He found, from what Ambrose said, that the objections by which the Manichæans had set him against the Gospel were all mistaken; and, when Monnica joined him, after he had been some time at Milan, she had the delight of finding that he had given up the Manichæan religion, and was once more a catechumen of the Church.

Augustine had still to fight his way through many difficulties. He had learnt that the best and highest wisdom of the heathen could not satisfy his mind and heart; and he now turned again to St. Paul's Epistles, and found that Scripture was something very different from what he had supposed it to be in the pride of his youth. He was filled with grief and shame on account of the vileness of his past life; and these feelings were made still stronger by the accounts which a friend gave him of the strict and self-denying ways of Antony and other monks. One day, as he lay in the garden of his lodging, with his mind tossed to and fro by anxious thoughts, so that he even wept in his distress, he heard a voice, like that of a child, singing over and over: "Take up and read! take up and read!" At first he fancied that the voice came from some child at play; but he could not think of any childish game in which such words were used. And then he remembered how St. Antony had been struck by the words of the Gospel which he heard in church (see p. 68); and it seemed to him that the voice, wherever it might come from, was a call of the same kind to

himself. So he eagerly seized the book of St. Paul's Epistles, which was lying by him, and, as he opened it, the first words on which his eyes fell were these: "Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. xiii. 13, 14). And, as he read, the words sank deeply into his heart, and from that moment he felt himself another man. As soon as he could do so without being particularly noticed, he gave up his office of professor and went into the country, where he spent some months in the company of his mother and some friends; and at the following Easter (A.D. 387) he was baptized by St. Ambrose. Monnica had now seen the desire of her heart fulfilled; and she soon after died in peace, as she was on her way back to Africa, in company with her son.

Augustine, after her death, spent some time at Rome, where he wrote a book against the Manichæans, and then, returning to his native place, Thagaste, he gave himself up for three years to devotion and study. In those days, it was not uncommon for persons who were thought likely to be useful to the Church to be seized and ordained, whether they liked it or not; and if they were expected to make very strong objections their mouths were even stopped by force. Now, Augustine's fame grew so great that he was afraid lest something of this kind should be done to him; and he did not venture to let himself be seen in any town where the bishopric was vacant, lest he should be obliged to become bishop against his will. He thought, however, that he was safe in accepting an invitation to Hippo, because it was provided with a bishop named Valerius. But, as he was one day listening to the bishop's sermon, Valerius began to say that his church was in want of

another priest; whereupon the people laid hold of Augustine, and presented him to the bishop, who ordained him without heeding his objections (A.D. 391). And four years later (A.D. 395) he was consecrated a bishop, to assist Valerius, who died soon after.

Augustine was bishop of Hippo for five-and-thirty years, and, although there were many sees of greater importance in Africa, his uncommon talents, and his high character, made him the foremost man of the African church. He was a zealous and exemplary bishop, and he wrote a great number of valuable books of many kinds. But the most interesting of them all is one which may be read in English, and is of no great length—namely, the "Confessions," in which he gives an account of the wanderings through which he had been brought into the way of truth and peace, and humbly gives thanks to God, whose gracious providence had guarded and guided him.

Part III

Augustine had a great many disputes with heretics and others who separated from the Church, or tried to corrupt its doctrine. But only two of his controversies need be mentioned here. One of these was with the Donatists, and the other was with the Pelagians.

The sect of the Donatists had arisen soon after the end of the last heathen persecution, and was now nearly a hundred years old. We have seen that St. Cyprian had a great deal of trouble with people who fancied that, if a man were put to death, or underwent any other considerable suffering for the name of Christ, he deserved to be held in great honour, and his wishes were to be attended to by other Christians, whatever his character and motives might have been (see p. 31). The same spirit which led to this mistake continued in Africa after St. Cyprian's time; and thus, when the persecution began there under Diocletian and Maximian (see Chap. IX.) (A.D. 303),

great numbers rushed into danger, in the hope of being put to death, and of so obtaining at once the blessedness and the glory of martyrdom. Many of these people were weary of their lives, or in some other respect were not of such characters that they could be reckoned as true Christian martyrs. The wise fathers of the Church always disapproved of such foolhardy doings, and would not allow people who acted in a way so unlike our Lord and His Apostle St. Paul, to be considered as martyrs; and Mensurius, who was the bishop of Carthage, steadfastly set his face against all such things.

One of the ways by which the persecutors hoped to put down the Gospel, was to get hold of all the copies of the Scriptures, and to burn them; and they required the clergy to deliver them up. But most of the officers who had to execute the orders of the emperors did not know a Bible from any other book; and it is said that, when some of them came to Mensurius, and asked him to deliver up his books, he gave them a quantity of books written by heretics, which he had collected (perhaps with the intention of burning them himself), and that all the while he had put the Scriptures safely out of the way, until the tyranny of the heathen should be overpast. When the persecution was at an end, some of the party whom he had offended by setting himself against their wrong notions as to martyrdom, brought up this matter against the bishop. They said that his account of it was false; that the books which he had given up were not what he said, but that he had really given up the Scriptures; and that, even if his story were true, he had done wrong in using such deceit. They gave the name of *traditors*[1] (or, as we should say, *traitors*), to those who confessed that they had been frightened into giving up the Scriptures; and they were for showing no mercy to any traditor, however much he might repent of his weakness.

[1] This means persons who *give up* or *betray*.

This severe party, then, tried to get up an opposition to Mensurius. They found, however, that they could make nothing of it. But when he died, and when Cæcilian, who had been his archdeacon and his right-hand man, was chosen bishop in his stead, these people made a great outcry, and set up another bishop of their own against him. All sorts of people who had taken offence at Cæcilian or Mensurius thought this a fine opportunity for having their revenge; and thus a strong party was formed. It was greatly helped by the wealth of a lady named Lucilla, whom Cæcilian had reproved for the superstitious habit of kissing a bone, which she supposed to have belonged to some martyr, before communicating at the Lord's table. The first bishop of the party was one Majorinus, who had been a servant of some sort to Lucilla; and, when Majorinus was dead, they set up a second bishop, named Donatus, after whom they were called Donatists. This Donatus was a clever and a learned man, and lived very strictly; but he was exceedingly proud and ill-tempered, and used very violent language against all who differed from him; and his sect copied his pride and bitterness. Many of them, however, while they professed to be extremely strict, neglected the plainer and humbler duties of Christian life.

The Donatists said that every member of their sect must be a saint; whereas our Lord Himself had declared that evil members would always be mixed with the good in His Church on earth, like tares growing in a field of wheat, or bad fishes mixed with good ones in a net; and that the separation of the good from the bad would not take place until the end of the world (St. Matt. xiii. 24-30, 36-43, 47-50). And they said that their own sect was the only true Church of Christ, although they had no congregations out of Africa, except one which was set up to please a rich lady in Spain, and another at Rome. Whenever

they made a convert from the Church, they baptized him afresh, as if his former baptism were good for nothing. They pretended to work miracles, and to see visions; and they made a very great deal of Donatus himself, so as even to pay him honours which ought not to have been given to any mere man; for they sang hymns to him, and swore by his grey hairs.

Shortly after Constantine took possession of Africa by his victory over Maxentius, and declared liberty of religion to the Christians (A.D. 312-313) (see p. 43), the Donatists applied to him against the Catholics (see p. 50); and it was curious that they should have been the first to call in the emperor as judge in such a matter, because they were afterwards very violent against the notion of an earthly sovereign's having any right to concern himself with the management of religious affairs. Constantine tried to settle the question by desiring some bishops to judge between the parties, and these bishops gave judgment in favour of the Catholics. The Donatists were dissatisfied, and asked for a new trial; whereupon Constantine gathered a council for the purpose at Arles, in Gaul (A.D. 314). There were about two hundred bishops at it, and among them were some from Britain. Here again the decision was against the Donatists, and they thereupon begged the emperor himself to examine their case; which he did, and once more condemned them (A.D. 316). Some severe laws were then made against them; their churches were taken away; many of them were banished, and were deprived of all that they had; and they were even threatened with death, although none of them suffered it during Constantine's reign.

The emperor, after a while, saw that they were growing wilder and wilder, that punishment had no effect on them, except to make them more unmanageable, and that they were not to be treated as reasonable people. He then did away with the laws against

them, and tried to keep them quiet by kindness; and in the last years of his reign his hands were so full of the Arian quarrels nearer home that he had little leisure to attend to the affairs of the Donatists.

Part IV

After the death of Constantius, Africa fell to the share of his youngest son, Constans, who sent some officers into the country with orders to make presents to the Donatists, in the hope of thus bringing them to join the Church. But Donatus flew into a great fury when he heard of this. "What has the emperor to do with the Church?" he asked; and he forbade the members of his sect (which was what he meant by "the Church") to touch any of the money that was offered to them.

By this time a set of wild people called *Circumcellions* had appeared among the Donatists. They got their name from two Latin words which mean *around the cottages;* because, instead of maintaining themselves by honest labour, they used to go about, like sturdy beggars, to the cottages of the country people, and demand whatever they wanted. They were of the poorest class, and very ignorant, but full of zeal for their religion. But, instead of being "pure and peaceable" (St. James iii. 17), this religion was fierce and savage, and allowed them to go on, without any check, in drunkenness and all sorts of misconduct. Their women, whom they called "sacred virgins," were as bad as the men, or worse. Bands of both sexes used to rove about the country, and keep the peaceable inhabitants in constant fear. As they went along, they sang or shouted "Praises be to God!" and this song, says St. Augustine, was heard with greater dread than the roaring of a lion. At first they thought they must not use swords, on account of what our Lord had said to Peter (St. Matt. xxvi. 52), so they carried

heavy clubs, which they called *Israels*, and with these they used to beat people, often so severely as to kill them. But afterwards the Circumcellions overcame their scruples, and armed themselves not only with swords, but with other weapons of steel, such as spears and hatchets. They attacked and plundered the churches of the Catholics, and the houses of the clergy, and they handled any whom they could catch very roughly. Besides this, they were fond of interfering in all sorts of affairs. People did not dare to ask for the payment of debts, or to reprove their slaves for misbehaviour, lest the Circumcellions should be called in upon them. And things got to such a pass, that the officers of the law were afraid to do their duty.

But the Circumcellions were as furious against themselves as against others. They used to court death in all manner of ways. Sometimes they stopped travellers on the roads, and desired to be killed, threatening to kill the travellers if they refused. And if they met a judge going on his rounds, they threatened him with death if he would not hand them over to his officers for execution. One judge whom they assailed in this way played them a pleasant trick. He seemed quite willing to humour them, and told his officers to bind them as if for execution; and when he had thus made them harmless and helpless, instead of ordering them to be put to death, he turned them loose, leaving them to get themselves unbound as they could. Many Circumcellions drowned themselves, rushed into fire, or threw themselves from rocks and were dashed to pieces; but they would not put an end to themselves by hanging, because that was the death of the traditor (or traitor) Judas. The Donatists were not all so mad as these people, and some of their councils condemned the practice of self-murder. But it went on nevertheless, and those who made away with themselves, or got others to kill them

in such ways as have been mentioned, were honoured as martyrs by the more violent part of the sect.

Constans made three attempts to win over the Donatists by presents, but they held out against all, and when the third attempt was made, in the year 347, by means of an officer named Macarius, the Circumcellions broke out into rebellion, and fought a battle with the emperor's troops. In this battle the Donatists were defeated, and two of their bishops, who had been busy in stirring up the rebels, were among the slain. Macarius then required the Donatists to join the Church, and threatened them with banishment if they should refuse, but they were still obstinate; and it would seem that they were treated harshly by the government, although the Catholic bishops tried to prevent it. Donatus himself and great numbers of his followers were sent into banishment, and for a time the sect appeared to have been put down.

Part V

Thus they remained until the death of the emperor Constantius (A.D. 361), and Donatus had died in the meantime. Julian, on succeeding to the empire, gave leave to all whom Constantius had banished on account of religion to return to their homes (see p. 63). But the Donatists were not the better for this, as they had not been banished by Constantius, but by Constans, before Constantius got possession of Africa, so they petitioned the emperor that they might be recalled from banishment, and in their petition they spoke of Julian in a way which disagreed strangely with their general defiance of governments, and which was especially ill-suited for one who had forsaken the Christian faith and was persecuting it at that very time. Julian granted their request, and forthwith they returned home in great triumph, and committed violent outrages against the Catholics. They took possession of a number of churches, and, professing

to consider everything that had been used by the Catholics unclean, they washed the pavement, scraped the walls, burnt the altars, melted the plate, and cast the Holy Sacrament to the dogs. They soon became strong throughout the whole north of Africa, and in one part of it, Numidia, they were stronger than the Catholics. After the death of Julian, laws were made against them from time to time, but do not seem to have been carried out. And although the Donatists quarrelled much among themselves, and split up into a number of parties, they were still very powerful in Augustine's day. In his own city of Hippo he found that they were more in number than the Catholics; and such was their bitter and pharisaical spirit that the bishop of the sect at Hippo would not let any of his people so much as bake for their Catholic neighbours.

Augustine did all that he could to reconcile the Donatists, but it was mostly in vain. He could not get their bishops or clergy to argue with him. They pretended to call themselves "the children of the martyrs," on account of the troubles which their forefathers had gone through in the reign of Constans; and they said that the children of the martyrs could not stoop to argue with sinners and traditors. Although they professed that their sect was made up of perfect saints, they accepted all sorts of worthless converts for the sake of swelling their numbers; whereas Augustine would not let any Donatists join the Church without inquiring into their characters, and, if he found that they had done anything for which they had been condemned by their sect to do penance, he insisted that they should go through a penance before being admitted into the Church.

But, notwithstanding the difficulties which he found in dealing with them, he and others succeeded in drawing over a great number of Donatists to the Church. And this made the Circumcellions so furious

that they fell on the Catholic clergy whenever they could find them, and tried to do them all possible mischief. They beat and mangled some of them cruelly; they put out the eyes of some by throwing a mixture of lime and vinegar into their faces; and, among other things, they laid a plan for waylaying Augustine himself, which, however, he escaped, through the providence of God. Many reports of these savage deeds were carried to the emperor, Honorius, and some of the sufferers appeared at his court to tell their own tale; whereupon the old laws against the sect were revived, and severe new laws were also made. In these even death was threatened against Donatists who should molest the Catholics; but Augustine begged that this penalty might be withdrawn, because the Catholic clergy, who knew more about the sect than anyone else, would not give information against it if the punishment of the Donatists were to be so great. And he and his brethren requested that the emperor would appoint a meeting to be held between the parties, in order that they might talk over their differences, and, if possible, might come to some agreement.

The emperor consented to do so, and a meeting took place accordingly, at Carthage, in 411, in the presence of a commissioner named Marcellinus. Two hundred and eighty-six Catholic bishops found their way to the city by degrees. But the Donatist bishops, who were two hundred and seventy-nine in number, entered it in a body, thinking to make all the effect that they could by the show of a great procession. At the conference (or meeting), which lasted three days, the Donatists behaved with their usual pride and insolence. When Marcellinus begged them to sit down, they refused, because our Lord had stood before Pilate. On being again asked to seat themselves, they quoted a text from the Psalms: "I will not sit with the wicked" (Ps. xxvi. 5); meaning that the

Catholics were the wicked, and that they themselves were too good to sit in such company. And when Augustine called them "brethren," they cried out in anger that they did not own any such brotherhood. They tried to throw difficulties in the way of arguing the question fairly, but on the third day their shifts would serve them no longer. Augustine then took the lead among the Catholics, and showed at great length both how wrongly the Donatists had behaved in the beginning of their separation from the Church, and how contrary to Scripture their principles were.

Marcellinus, who had been sent by the emperor to hear both parties, gave judgment in favour of the Catholics. Such of the Donatist bishops and clergy as would join the Church were allowed to keep possession of their places, but the others were to be banished. Augustine had at first been against the idea of trying to force people in matters of religion. But he saw that many were brought by these laws to join the Church, and after a time he came to think that such laws were good and useful; nay, he even tried to find a Scripture warrant for them in the text: "Compel them to come in" (St. Luke xiv. 23). And thus, unhappily, this great and good man was led to lend his name to the grievous error of thinking that force, or even persecution, may be used rightly, and with good effect, in matters of religion. It was one of the mistakes to which people are liable when they form their opinions without having the opportunity of seeing how things work in the long run, and on a large scale. We must regret that Augustine seemed in any way to countenance such means; but even although he erred in some measure as to this, let us hope that he would have abhorred the cruelties which have since been done under pretence of maintaining the true religion, and of bringing people to embrace it.

While some of the Donatists were thus brought

over to the Church, others became more outrageous than ever. Many of them grew desperate, and made away with themselves. One of their bishops threatened that, if he were required by force to join the Catholics, he would shut himself up in a church with his people, and that they would then set the building on fire and perish in the flames. There were many among the Donatists who would have been mad enough to do a thing of this kind; but it would seem that the bishop was not put to the trial which he expected.

The Donatists dwindled away from this time, and were little heard of after Augustine's days, although there were still some in Africa two hundred years later, as we learn from the letters of St. Gregory the Great.

Part VI

Of all the disputes in which Augustine was engaged, that with the Pelagians was the most famous. The leader of the people, Pelagius, was a Briton or, as some think, an Irishman. His name would mean, either in Latin or in Greek, a *man of the sea*. Pelagius was the first native of the British Isles who gained fame as a writer or as a divine; but his fame was not of a desirable kind, as it arose from the errors into which he ran. He was a man of learning, and of strict life; and at Rome, where he spent many years, he was much respected, until in his old age he began to set forth opinions which brought him the repute of being a heretic. At Rome he became acquainted with a man named Celestius, who is said by some to have been an Italian, while others suppose him an Irishman. It is not known whether Celestius learnt his opinions from Pelagius, or whether each of them had come to think in the same way before they knew one another. But, however this may be, they became great friends, and joined in teaching the same errors.

Augustine, as we have seen, had passed through such trials of the spirit that he thoroughly felt the need of God's gracious help in order to do, or even to will, any good thing. Pelagius, on the contrary, seems to have always gone on steadily in the way of his religion. Now this was really a reason why he should have been thankful for the grace and mercy of God which had spared him the dangers and the terrible sufferings which others have to bear in the course of their spiritual life. But, unhappily, Pelagius overlooked the help of grace. He owned, indeed, that all is from God, but instead of understanding that the power of doing any good, or of avoiding any sin, is the especial gift of the Holy Spirit, he fancied that the power of living without sin was given to us by God as a part of our *nature*. He saw that some people made a wrong use of the doctrine of our natural corruption. He saw that, instead of throwing the blame of their sins on their own neglect of the grace which is offered to us through Christ, they spoke of the weakness and corruption of their nature as if these were an excuse for their sins. This was, indeed, a grievous error, and one which Pelagius would have done well to warn people against. But, in condemning it, he went far wrong in an opposite way: he said that man's nature is *not* corrupt, that it is nothing the worse for the fall of our first parents, that man can be good by his own natural power without needing any higher help, that men might live without sin, and that many *had* so lived. These notions of his are mentioned and are condemned in the ninth Article of the Church of England, where it is said that "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, as the Pelagians do vainly talk"—that is to say, original sin is not merely the actual imitation of Adam's sin. And then it is said in the next Article: "The condition of man, after the fall of Adam, is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his

own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God. Wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasing and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us (or *going before* us), that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will." Thus at every step there is a need of grace from above to help us on the way of salvation.

After Rome had been taken by the Goths, in the year 410 (see p. 103), Pelagius and Celestius passed over into Africa, from which Pelagius, after a short stay, went into the Holy Land. Celestius tried to get himself ordained by the African Church, but objections were made to him, and a council was held which condemned and excommunicated him. Augustine was too busy with the Donatists to attend this council, but he was very much alarmed by the errors of the new teachers, and soon took the lead in writing against them and in opposing them by other means.

Pelagius was examined by some councils in the Holy Land, and contrived to persuade them that there was nothing wrong in his doctrines. He and Celestius even got a bishop of Rome, Zosimus, to own them as sound in the faith and to reprove the African bishops for condemning them. The secret of this was, that Pelagius used words in a crafty way, which neither the synods in the Holy Land nor the bishops of Rome suspected. When he was charged with denying the need of grace, he said that he owned it to be necessary, but, instead of using the word *grace* in its right meaning, to signify the working of the Holy Spirit on the heart, he used it as a name for other means by which God helps us, such as the power which Pelagius supposed to be bestowed on us as a part of our nature, the forgiveness of our sins in baptism, the offer of salvation, the knowledge and instruction given to us through Holy Scripture, or in other ways. By such tricks the Pelagians imposed on the

bishop of Rome and others, but the Africans, with Augustine at their head, stood firm. They steadily maintained that Pelagius and Celestius were unsound in their opinions; they told Zosimus that he had no right to meddle with Africa, and that he had been altogether deceived by the heretics. So, after a while, the bishop of Rome took quite the opposite line, and condemned Pelagius with his followers, and they were also condemned in several councils, of which the most famous was the General Council of Ephesus, held in the year 431. Augustine did great service in opposing these dangerous doctrines, but in doing so, he said some things as to God's choosing of his elect, and predestinating them (or *marking them out beforehand*) to salvation, which are rather startling, and might lead to serious error. But as to this deep and difficult subject let us end by quoting a few words from the seventeenth Article of the Church of England: "We must receive God's promises in such wise as they be generally set forth to us in Holy Scripture; and in our doings, that will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared to us in the word of God."

Part VII

Augustine was still busied in the Pelagian controversy when a fearful calamity burst upon his country. The commander of the troops in Africa, Boniface, had been an intimate friend of his, and had been much under his influence. A rival of Boniface, Aëtius, persuaded the empress, Placidia, who governed in the name of her young son, Valentinian the Third, to recall the general from Africa, and at the same time he persuaded Boniface to disobey the order, telling him that his ruin was intended. Boniface, who was a man of open and generous mind, did not suspect the villany of Aëtius, and, as the only means of saving himself, he rebelled against the

emperor and invited the Vandals from Spain to invade Africa. These Vandals were a tribe of barbarians who had overrun part of Spain about twenty years before. They now gladly accepted Boniface's invitation, and passed in great numbers into Africa, where the Moors joined them, and the Donatists eagerly seized the opportunity of avenging themselves on the Catholics by assisting the invaders. The country was laid waste, and the Catholic clergy were treated with especial cruelty, both by the Vandals (who were Arians) and by the Donatists.

Augustine had urged Boniface to return to his duty as a subject of the empire. Boniface, who was disgusted by the savage doings of the Vandals, and had discovered the tricks by which Aëtius had tempted him to revolt, begged the Vandal king, Genseric, to return to Spain, but he found that he had rashly raised a power which he could not manage, and the barbarians laughed at his entreaties. As he could not prevail with them by words, he fought a battle with them, but he was defeated, and he then shut himself up in Augustine's city, Hippo.

During all these troubles Augustine was very active in writing letters of exhortation to his brethren, and in endeavouring to support them under their trials. And when Hippo was crowded by a multitude of all kinds, who had fled to its walls for shelter, he laboured among them without ceasing. In June, 430, the Vandals laid siege to the place, and soon after, the bishop fell sick in consequence of his labours. He felt that his end was near, and he wished, during his short remaining time, to be free from interruption in preparing for death. He, therefore, would not allow his friends to see him, except at the hours when he took food or medicine. He desired that the penitential psalms—the seven psalms which especially express sorrow for sin—should be hung up within his sight, and he read them over and over, shedding floods of

tears as he read. On August 28, 430, he was taken to his rest, and in the following year Hippo fell into the hands of the Vandals, who thus became masters of the whole of northern Africa.

CHAPTER XXII

COUNCILS OF EPHESUS AND CHALCEDON

(A.D. 431–451)

AUGUSTINE died just as a great council was about to be held in the East. In preparing for this council a compliment was paid to him which was not paid to any other person, for, whereas it was usual to invite the chief bishop only of each province to such meetings, and to leave him to choose which of his brethren should accompany him, a special invitation was sent to Augustine, although he was not a metropolitan (see p. 92), but only bishop of a small town. This shows what fame he had gained, and in what respect his name was held, even in the Eastern churches.

The object of calling the council was to inquire into the teaching of Nestorius, bishop of Constantinople. It laid down clearly the truth which Nestorius was charged with denying—that (as is said in the Athanasian Creed) our blessed Lord, "although He be God and man, yet is He not two, but one Christ," and that since, from the first moment of His human existence, He was fully and entirely God, His mother is rightly called Theotokos, or Mother of God (literally, God-bearer). This council, which was held at Ephesus in the year 431, is reckoned as the Third General Council.

Some years after it, a disturbance arose about a monk of Constantinople, named Eutyches, who had

been very zealous against Nestorius, and now ran into errors of an opposite kind. Another council was held at Ephesus in 449, but Dioscorus, bishop of Alexandria, and a number of disorderly monks who were favourable to Eutyches, behaved in such a furious manner at this assembly, that, instead of being considered as a general council, it is known by a name which means a *meeting of robbers*. But two years later, when a new emperor had succeeded to the government of the East, another general council was held at Chalcedon (A.D. 451), and there the doctrines of Eutyches were condemned, and Dioscorus was deprived of his bishopric. This council, which was the fourth of the general councils, was attended by six hundred and thirty bishops. It laid down the doctrine that our Lord is "One not by conversion (or *turning*) of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God: One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person, for, as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ" (Athanasian Creed).

According, then, to these two councils, which were held against Nestorius and Eutyches, we are to believe that our blessed Lord is really God and really man. The Godhead and the manhood are not *mixed* together in Him, so as to make something which would be neither the one nor the other (which is what the creed means by "confusion of substance"); but they are in Him distinct from each other, just as the soul and body are distinct in man, and yet they are not two *Persons*, but are joined together in one Person, just as the soul and the body are joined in one man. It was of the utmost importance that this should be clearly taught, and it is for this reason that the "Athanasian Creed" is placed in our Prayer-Book.

Two other things were settled by the Council of Chalcedon. It gave the bishops of Constantinople authority over Thrace, Asia, and Pontus, and it raised

Jerusalem, which until then had been only an ordinary bishopric, to have authority of the same kind over the Holy Land. These chief bishops are now called *patriarchs,* and there were thus five patriarchs—namely, the bishops of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem. The map will show you how these patriarchates were divided;[1] but there were still some Christian countries which did not belong to any of them. The Church in the kingdom of Persia had its own independent patriarch or "Catholicos." Within the empire, Cyprus was "autocephalous," or self-governing. The patriarchate of Rome was still undeveloped, and at this time hardly extended beyond Italy and the neighbouring islands.

Having thus mentioned the title of patriarchs, the use of another title which we hear much oftener, the title of *pope,* may be explained here. The proper meaning of it is *father,* in short, it is nothing else than the word *papa.* This title of pope (or father), then, was at first given to all bishops, but, by degrees, it came to be confined in its use, so that, in the east, only the bishops of Rome and Alexandria were called by it, while in the west it was given to the bishop or patriarch of Rome alone.

CHAPTER XXIII

FALL OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE

(A.D. 451–476)

THE empire of the West was now fast sinking. One weak prince was at the head of it after another, and the spirit of the old Romans, who had conquered the world, had quite died out. Tribe after tribe of barbarians poured in from the north. The Goths, under

[1] Read here the Explanation of the Map, at the beginning of the book.

Alaric, who took Rome by siege, in the reign of Honorius, have been already mentioned (p. 103). Forty years later, Attila, king of the Huns, who was called "The Scourge of God," kept both the east and the west in terror. He and his people were Tartars from Central Asia, and, unlike the Goths, they were heathen. In the year 451 he advanced as far as Orleans, and, after having for some time besieged it, he made a breach in the wall of the city. The soldiers of the garrison, and such of the citizens as could fight, had done their best in the defence of the walls; those who could not bear arms betook themselves to the churches, and were occupied in anxious prayer. The bishop, Anianus, had before earnestly begged that troops might be sent to the relief of the place, and he had posted a man on a tower, with orders to look out in the direction from which succour might be hoped for. The watchman twice returned to the bishop without any tidings of comfort, but the third time he said that he had noticed a little cloud of dust as far off as he could see. "It is the aid of God!" said the bishop, and the people who heard him took up the words, and shouted: "It is the aid of God!" The little cloud, from being "like a man's hand" (1 Kings xviii. 44), grew larger and drew nearer; the dust was cleared away by the wind, and the glitter of spears and armour was seen, and just as the Huns had broken through the wall, and were rushing into the city, greedy for plunder and bloodshed, an army of Romans and allies arrived and forced them to retreat. After having been thus driven from Orleans, Attila was defeated in a great battle near Châlons, on the River Marne, and withdrew into Germany.

In the following year (452) Attila invaded Italy, where he caused great consternation. But when the bishop of Rome, Leo the Great, went to his camp near Mantua, and entreated him to spare the country, Attila was so much struck by the bishop's venerable

appearance and his powerful words, that he agreed to withdraw on receiving a large sum of money. A few months later he suddenly died, and his kingdom soon fell to pieces.

By degrees the Romans lost Britain, Gaul, Spain, and Africa; and Italy was all that was left of the western part of the empire.

Genseric, who, as has been mentioned (p. 140), had led the Vandals into Africa, long kept the Mediterranean in constant dread of his fleets. Three years after the invasion of Italy by Attila, he appeared at the mouth of the Tiber (A.D. 455), having been invited by the empress, Eudoxia, who wished to be revenged on her husband, in consequence of his having told her that he had been the cause of her former husband's death. As the Vandals approached the walls of Rome, the bishop, Leo, went forth at the head of his clergy. He pleaded with Genseric as he had before pleaded with Attila, and he brought him to promise that the city should not be burnt, and that the lives of the inhabitants should be spared; but Genseric gave up the place for fourteen days to plunder, and the sufferings of the people were frightful. The Vandal king returned to Africa with a vast quantity of booty,[1] and with a great number of captives, among whom were the unfortunate empress and her two daughters. On this occasion the bishop of Carthage, Deogratias, behaved with noble charity —he sold the gold and silver plate of the church, and with the price he redeemed some of the captives, and relieved the sufferings of others. Two of the churches were turned into hospitals. The sick were comfortably lodged, and were plentifully supplied with food and medicine; and the good bishop, old and infirm as he was, visited them often, by night as well

[1] The seven-branched candlestick from the Temple of Jerusalem is believed to have been part of this booty, and to have gone to the bottom when the ship which bore it was wrecked.

as by day, and spoke words of kindness and of Christian consolation to them.

This behaviour of Deogratias was the more to his honour, because his own flock was suffering severely from the oppression of the Vandals, who, as we have already seen (p. 140) were Arians. Genseric treated the Catholics of Africa very tyrannically; his son and successor, Hunneric, was still more cruel to them; and as long as the Vandals held possession of Africa, the persecution, in one shape or another, was carried on almost without ceasing.

The last emperor of the West, Augustulus, a helpless boy, was deposed in the year 476, and a barbarian prince named Odoacer became king of Italy. In theory he was subject to the emperor at Constantinople, to whose dominions Italy was nominally reunited: in practice, of course, he was independent. Odoacer was soon overcome and succeeded by the great Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths, or East Goths.

CHAPTER XXIV

CONVERSION OF THE BARBARIANS—CHRISTIANITY IN BRITAIN

As the old empire of Rome disappears, the modern kingdoms of Europe begin to come to view; and we may now look at the progress of the Gospel among the new conquerors of the West.

The barbarians, who had become masters of Gaul, Spain, South Germany, and other parts of the empire, were soon converted to a sort of Christianity, but, unfortunately, it was not the true Catholic faith. You have read (p. 104) that Ulfilas, "the Moses of the Goths," led his people into the errors of Arianism. As it was from the Goths that the missionaries generally went forth to convert the other northern

peoples, these peoples, too, for the most part, became Arian; while some of them, after having been converted by Catholics, afterwards fell into Arianism. It is curious to observe how opposite the course of conversion among these tribes was to what it had been in earlier times. In the Roman empire, the Gospel worked its way up from the poor and simple people who were the first to believe it, until the emperor himself became at length a convert. But among the tribes which now overran the western empire, the missionaries usually began by making a convert of the prince; when the prince was converted, his subjects followed him to the font; and if he changed from Catholicism to Arianism, or from Arianism to Catholicism, the people did the same. In the course of time, all the tribes which had professed Arianism were brought over to the true faith. The last who held out were the Goths in Spain, who gave up their errors at a great council which was held at Toledo in 589; and the Lombards, in the north of Italy, who were converted in the early part of the following century.

Britain was not troubled by Arianism, and St. Athanasius bears witness to the firmness of the British bishops in the right faith. But Pelagius, as we have seen (p. 136), was himself a Briton; and, although he did not himself try to spread his errors in his native land, one of his followers, named Agricola, brought them into Britain, and did a great deal of mischief (A.D. 429). Britain had been long under the power of the Romans, but, as the empire grew weaker, the Romans found that they could not afford to keep up an army there; and they had withdrawn their garrison from Britain in the year 409. But after this, when the Picts and Scots of the north invaded the southern part of the island (or what we now call England), the Britons in their alarm begged for the assistance of the Romans against them. And it would seem as if the

British clergy had come to depend on the help of others in much the same way, for when they found what havoc the Pelagian Agricola was making among their people, they sent over into Gaul and begged that the bishops of that country would send them aid against him.

Two bishops, German of Auxerre, and Lupus of Troyes, were sent accordingly by a council to which the petition of the Britons had been made. Their preaching had a great effect on the people, and their holy lives preached still better than their sermons; they disputed with the Pelagian teachers at Verulam, the town where St Alban was martyred (p. 42), and which now takes its name from him; and they succeeded for the time in putting down the heresy.

It is said that, while German and Lupus were in Britain, the Picts and Saxons joined in invading it, and that the Britons, finding their army unfit to fight the enemy, sent to beg the assistance of the two Gaulish bishops. So German and Lupus went to the British army, and joined it just before Easter. A great number of the soldiers were baptized at Easter, and German put himself at their head. The enemy came on, expecting an easy victory, but the bishops thrice shouted *Hallelujah!* and all the army took up the shout, which was echoed from the mountains again and again, so that the pagans were struck with terror, and expected the mountains to fall on them. They threw down their arms, and ran away, leaving a great quantity of spoil behind them, and many of them rushed into a river, where they were drowned. The place where this victory is said to have been gained is still pointed out in Flintshire, and is known by a Welsh name, which means, "German's Field." Pelagianism began to revive in Britain some years later, but St. German came over a second time, and once more put it down.

But soon after this, the people afterwards known as

the English came into Britain. According to tradition, Hengist and Horsa landed in Kent in the year 449, and other chiefs followed, with their fierce heathen warriors. There was a struggle between these and the Britons, which lasted a hundred years, until at length the invaders triumphed, and the land was once more overspread by heathenism, except where the Britons kept up their Christianity in the mountainous districts of the west—Cumberland, Wales, and Cornwall. You shall hear by-and-by how the Gospel was introduced among the English.

CHAPTER XXV

SCOTLAND AND IRELAND

THE only thing which seems to be known about the religious history of Scotland in these times is, that a bishop named Ninian preached among the Southern Picts between the years 412 and 432, and established a see at Whithorn, in Galloway. But in the year of St. Ninian's death, a far more famous missionary, St. Patrick, who is called "the Apostle of Ireland," began his labours in that island.

It is quite uncertain where Patrick was born, but it seems to have been somewhere in Roman Britain. He certainly was, and always regarded himself as, a citizen of the Roman empire. But wherever it may have been, his birth took place about the year 387. His father was a deacon of the Church, his grandfather was a priest, and thus Patrick had the opportunities of a religious training from his infancy. He did not, however, use these opportunities so well as he might have done; but it pleased God to bring him to a better mind by the way of affliction.

When Patrick was about sixteen years old, he was carried off by some pirates (or *sea-robbers*), and was

sold to a heathen prince in Ireland, where he was set to keep cattle, and had to bear great hardships. But "there," says he, "it was that the Lord brought me to a sense of the unbelief of my heart, that I might call my sins to remembrance, and turn with all my heart to the Lord, who regarded my low estate, and, taking pity on my youth and ignorance, watched over me before I knew Him or had sense to discern between good and evil, and counselled me and comforted me as a father doth a son. I was employed every day in feeding cattle, and often in the day I used to betake myself to prayer; and the love of God thus grew stronger and stronger, and His faith and fear increased in me, so that in a single day I could utter as many as a hundred prayers, and in the night almost as many, and I used to remain in the woods and on the mountains, and would rise for prayer before daylight, in the midst of snow and ice and rain; and I felt no harm from it, nor was I ever unwilling, because my heart was hot within me. I was not from my childhood a believer in the only God, but continued in death and in unbelief until I was severely chastened; and in truth I have been humbled by hunger and nakedness, and it was my lot to go about in Ireland every day sore against my will, until I was almost worn out. But this proved rather a blessing to me, because by means of it I have been corrected of the Lord, and He has fitted me for being what it once seemed unlikely that I should be, so that I should concern myself about the salvation of others, whereas I used to have no such thoughts even for myself."

After six years of captivity, Patrick escaped, found a ship going to the Continent, and after a long journey reached Italy. He then went to study at the monastery of Lerins, an island in the Mediterranean Sea, near Cannes, where there was a famous school. After some years he returned to his kinsmen in Britain. One night he dreamed that a man named

Victoricus brought him letters from Ireland, and that as he read them he heard the cry of a multitude in the wood of Foclad, saying: "We pray thee, come and walk among us, as before." Believing this dream to be a call from God, he determined to preach the Gospel in the land where he had been a captive. He was ordained deacon at Auxerre, and at last, after fourteen years in Orders, he was consecrated bishop for the Irish by St. Germanus (the same who went to Britain to oppose Pelagianism) in 432.

There had already been some Christians in that country, and a missionary bishop named Palladius had lately attempted to work there, but had allowed himself to be soon discouraged, and had withdrawn. But Patrick had more zeal and patience than Palladius, and gave up all the remainder of his life to the Irish, so that he would not even allow himself the pleasure of paying a visit to his native country. His first success was at Saul, in County Down, where he converted a chief named Dichu. Soon afterwards he went to Tara, in County Meath, the home of the "High-King" of Ireland, and one of the chief centres of the religion of the Druids. It is said that on a great heathen festival, when all fires had to be put out, the king noticed a light on the hill of Slane. This was a fire lighted by Patrick, who was keeping Easter there with his companions. The king sent for the daring stranger, and was so much impressed that he gave him leave to preach, though he never became a Christian himself. Patrick then preached the Gospel throughout the north and west of Ireland, and converted many, though once or twice his life was in danger. On the accession of Pope Leo he went to Rome for his approval, and soon after his return founded the monastery of Armagh, and set his episcopal see there. He also visited the king of Leinster at Naas, and the king of Munster at Cashel. He died at Saul, his first settlement, in 461. He is the Apostle

of Ireland,[1] the founder of the Irish Church, and the first archbishop of Armagh. His successors have been Primates of All Ireland ever since. Ireland was a Christian country long before England, and the see of Armagh is 150 years older than that of Canterbury.

The Church continued to flourish in Ireland after St. Patrick's death, and learning found a home there, while wars and conquests banished it from most other countries of the West. In the year 565, the Irish Church sent forth a famous missionary named Columba, who, with twelve companions, went into Scotland. He preached among the Northern Picts, and founded a monastery in one of the western islands, which from him got the name of Icolumbkill (that is to say, the *Island of Columba of the Churches*), now called Iona. From that little island the light of the Gospel afterwards spread, not only over Scotland, but far towards the south of England, and many monasteries, both in Scotland and in Ireland, were under the rule of its abbot.

For hundreds of years the schools of Ireland continued to be in great repute. Young men flocked to them from England, and even from foreign lands, and many Irish missionaries laboured in various countries abroad. The chief of those who fall within the time to which this little book reaches was Columbanus (a different person from Columba, although their names are so much alike). He left Ireland with twelve companions in the year 589, preached in the east of France for many years, and afterwards in Switzerland and in Italy, and died in 615, at the monastery of Bobbio, which he had founded among the Apennine mountains. One of his disciples, Gall, is styled "The Apostle of Switzerland," and founded a great monastery, which from him is called St. Gall.

[1] There is a well-known story that St. Patrick illustrated the doctrine of the Trinity by the triple leaf of the shamrock, or clover, and this is why the shamrock is the symbol of Ireland.

CHAPTER XXVI

CLOVIS

(A.D. 496)

THE most famous and the most important of all the conversions which took place about this time was that of Clovis, king of the Franks. From being the chief of a small, though brave people, on the borders of France and Belgium, he grew by degrees to be the founder of the great Frankish monarchy. His queen, Clotilda, was a Christian, and long tried in vain to bring him over to her faith. "The gods whom you worship," she said, "are nothing, and can profit neither themselves nor others, for they are graven out of stone, or wood, or metal, and the names which you give them were not the names of gods, but of men. But He ought rather to be worshipped who by His word made out of nothing the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that in them is." Clovis does not seem to have cared very much about the truth, one way or the other; but he had the fancy (which was common among the heathen, and which is often mentioned in the Old Testament), that if people did not prosper in this world the god whom they served had not the power to protect them and give them success. And, as he lived in the time when the Roman empire of the west came to an end, the fall of the empire, which had now been Christian for more than a hundred and fifty years, seemed to him to prove that the Christian religion could not be true.

Clotilda persuaded her husband to let their eldest son be baptized. But the child died within a few days after, and Clovis said that his baptism was the cause of his death. When another prince was born, however, he allowed him, too, to be baptized. Clotilda continued to press her husband with all the reasons

that she could think of in order to bring him over to the Gospel. Some of her reasons were true and good; some of them were drawn from the beliefs of these times, such as stories about miracles wrought at the tomb of St. Martin at Tours. Perhaps the bad reasons were more likely than the good ones to have an effect on a rough barbarian prince such as Clovis; but Clotilda could not persuade him in any way.

At length, in the year 496, he was engaged in battle with a German tribe at a place called Tolbiac, near Cologne, and found himself in great danger of being defeated. He called on his own gods, but without success, and at last he bethought himself of the God to whose worship Clotilda had so long been trying to convert him. So, in his anxiety, he stretched out his arms towards the sky, and called on the name of Christ, promising that, if the God of Clotilda would help him in his strait, he would become a Christian. A victory followed, which Clovis ascribed to the effect of his prayer. He then put himself under the instruction of St. Remigius, bishop of Rheims, that he might get a knowledge of Christian doctrine, and at the following Christmas he was baptized in Rheims cathedral, where the kings of France were afterwards crowned for centuries, down to the unfortunate Charles X. in 1824. Remigius caused it to be decked for the occasion with beautiful carpets and hangings. A vast number of tapers shed their bright light over the building, while all without was covered by the darkness of a December evening; and we are told that the sweet perfume of incense seemed to those who were there like the air of paradise. As Clovis entered the church and heard the solemn chant of psalms, he was overcome with awe. Turning to Remigius, who led him by the hand, he asked: "Is this the kingdom of heaven which you have promised me?" "No," answered the bishop; "but it is the beginning of the way to it." When they had reached the font,

Remigius addressed the king by a name on which the noblest among the Franks prided themselves: "Sicambrian, gently bow thy neck; worship that which thou hast burnt, and burn that which thou hast worshipped." Three thousand of the Frankish warriors were forthwith baptized, in imitation of their leader.

Remigius had much influence over Clovis as to religious things, and instructed him as he found opportunity. One day, as he was reading to the king the story of our Lord's sufferings, Clovis was so much moved by it that he started up in anger and cried out: "If I had been there with my Franks, I would have avenged His wrongs!"

From what has been said it will be understood that the religion of Clovis was not of an enlightened kind, and there was much in his character and actions which did not become his Christian profession. Yet his conversion, such as it was, appears to have been sincere. As his conquests spread, he put down Arianism wherever he found it, and planted the Catholic faith instead of it. And from the circumstance that Clovis was converted to Catholic Christianity at a time when all the other princes of the west were Arians, and when the emperor of the East favoured the heresy of Eutyches (see p. 142), the kings of France obtained the title of "Eldest Son of the Church," for though Clovis and his Franks were a German tribe, speaking a German dialect, the later French monarchy regarded him as its founder. From this time the country which had been called Gaul took the name of France, the land of the Franks, and after a time they ceased to speak German and adopted the language of their subjects, which was Latin developing into French.

CHAPTER XXVII

JUSTINIAN

(A.D. 527–565)

After the Council of Chalcedon (A.D. 451) the most important of the emperors was Justinian, whose reign lasted eight-and-thirty years, from 527 to 565. Under him the Vandals were conquered in Africa, and the Goths in Italy. Both these countries became once more parts of the empire, and Arianism was put down in both.

Justinian also, in the year 529, put an end to the old heathen philosophy, by ordering that the schools of Athens, in which St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, and the emperor Julian had studied together two hundred years before (see p. 76), should be shut up. The philosophers, who had continued to teach their heathen notions there (although they had been obliged to treat the religion of the empire with outward respect), were in great distress at finding their trade taken away from them. They thought it unsafe to remain in Justinian's dominions, and made their way into Persia, where the king was a heathen, and was said to be a friend of learned men. The king received them kindly; but the Persian heathenism was very different from their own, and the ways of the country were altogether strange to them, so that they felt themselves very uncomfortable in Persia, and became so home-sick as to be willing to risk even their lives for the sake of getting back to their own country. Happily for them, the Persian king was able to intercede for them in making peace with Justinian, and it was agreed that they might live within the empire as they liked, without being troubled by the laws, if they would only remain quiet and not try to draw Christian youths away from the

faith. The philosophers were only too glad to return on these terms. It is not recorded that they became Christians themselves, but all that is said of them is, that when they died there were no more of them, and that heathen philosophy no longer stood in the way of the Gospel.

Justinian spent vast sums of money on buildings, especially on churches. The grandest of all his buildings was the cathedral of Constantinople. The church had been founded by Constantine the Great, but was once burnt down after the banishment of St. Chrysostom, and a second time in this reign. Justinian rebuilt it at a vast expense, and, as he cast his eyes around it on the day of the consecration, after expressing his thankfulness to God for having been allowed to accomplish so great a work, he gave vent to the pride of his heart in the words: "I have beaten thee, O Solomon!" The cathedral was afterwards partly destroyed by an earthquake, but Justinian again restored it and caused it to be once more consecrated, about two years before his death. We learn from one of his laws that this church had sixty priests, a hundred deacons, forty deaconesses, ninety sub-deacons, a hundred and ten readers, five-and-twenty singers, and a hundred doorkeepers. And (which we should perhaps not have expected to hear) a law was made for the purpose of preventing the number of clergy connected with the cathedral from increasing beyond this, lest it should not have wealth enough to maintain a greater number! This great building is still standing (although it is now, unhappily, in the hands of the Mohammedan Turks), and it is regarded as one of the wonders of the world. It was dedicated to the Eternal Wisdom, and is now commonly known by the name of St. Sophia (*sophia* being the Greek word for *wisdom*).

CHAPTER XXVIII

NESTORIANS AND MONOPHYSITES

After the loss of the Latin provinces, which were taken by the barbarians, the Roman empire became more and more Greek. The emperor lived at Constantinople, which was a Greek city, and he and his government spoke Greek. What had been a universal empire was narrowing down into a Greek national state. The Church was now so closely connected with the empire that it, too, became more and more guided by Greek bishops.

But the Churches of Syria and Egypt, which had their Bible, their services, and their theological books in their own languages, did not like the prospect of being more and more governed by Greek bishops. The feeling against Constantinople and the Greeks was especially strong in Egypt, which was now a Christian country. When the Council of Chalcedon deposed Dioscurus, the patriarch of Alexandria, because he accepted the false teaching of Eutyches, the Egyptians, led by the monks of Nitria, rose in revolt. They would not have the patriarch whom the emperor sent to take Dioscurus' place; they would not recognize the decrees of the Council. They elected a patriarch of their own, who was called by his enemies "Timothy the Cat."

For the next two centuries the Church in what was left of the Roman empire was distracted by this controversy. At first the emperors and their Greek bishops were inclined to give way to the Egyptians. The result was that the Roman bishop excommunicated all the Greeks, and the schism lasted for thirty-five years (484-519). But when, as we saw in the last chapter, the emperor's generals reconquered Italy and Africa, it was necessary to come to an agreement with

Rome, and the immediate result was another revolt in Egypt. Rome insisted on the acceptance of the decrees of Chalcedon, which had been passed through the influence of Pope Leo. The Egyptians refused to recognize these decrees. Various attempts at a compromise were made, but all were unsuccessful, because neither side would concede anything. The Egyptians and their friends were called "Monophysites," or believers in one nature, because they held that our Lord's human nature had ceased to exist and that He has now only one nature, the Divine.

Monophysitism also made great progress in Syria. Justinian imprisoned all the Monophysite bishops there; but a man called Jacob Baradæus was determined not to let his party die out. He had himself consecrated by three bishops in prison, and then for forty years he went about Syria consecrating bishops and ordaining priests for the persecuted Monophysites. He disguised himself as a beggar, and became known as "The Ragged." From him the Monophysite Church of Syria was called "Jacobite" (not to be confused with the Jacobites of English history). They called the emperor's party "Melkites," or Royalists (from "melek," a king or emperor). Meanwhile, the Church in the kingdom of Persia, beyond the frontier, had always sympathized with the teaching of Nestorius (p. 141). When Constantinople became Monophysite in 484, the patriarch of the East, as their chief bishop was called, broke off communion, which was an advantage for him in one way, because if the king of Persia saw that his Christian subjects were of a different religion from that of his enemy, the Roman emperor, he would be less likely to persecute them. So this East Syrian, or, as it is now called, Assyrian, Church drifted further and further away from the rest of Christendom. Though it had never accepted the Council of Ephesus, which condemned Nestorius, it did accept the Council of

Chalcedon, which confirmed the decrees of Ephesus; and it is now widely believed that neither the "Nestorians" nor the Monophysites really held the false doctrines of which they were accused, but that the disputes were due to misunderstandings and to the difference between the Greek, Syrian, and Coptic (Egyptian) languages.

The Assyrian Church became very great and powerful, and sent missionaries all over Asia, even as far as India and China. Long afterwards it fell upon evil days, but it still exists in Iraq, under the successor of its ancient patriarchs, and in India there is a large body of Christians whose forefathers were converted by its missionaries, and who are called the Church of Malabar.

The Council of Chalcedon was the Fourth General Council. The Fifth General Council was held at Constantinople in 553, and condemned certain writings which were said to be Nestorian, and which are called "The Three Chapters." There was a schism in Italy on account of this council. Some Italian Churches would not recognize the pope, because he had accepted this council, and they set up a rival patriarchate at Aquileia, near Trieste. It is because of this patriarch of Aquileia that the archbishop of Venice still bears the title of patriarch. The Sixth General Council was held in 681, also at Constantinople. It condemned the doctrine that our Lord had only one will.

Not only did the Assyrian or "Nestorian" Church send out missionaries, but so did the Monophysites of Egypt, who converted the Nubians on the Upper Nile. The Abyssinian Church was also attached to the Monophysite Communion. The Armenian Church and nation never accepted the decrees of Chalcedon, and are still separated from the Greek churches for this reason.

CHAPTER XXIX

ST. BENEDICT

(A.D. 480–543)

PART I

LET us now look again at the monks. Their way of life was at first devised as a means of either practising repentance for sin or rising to such a height of holiness as was supposed to be beyond the reach of persons busied in the the affairs of this world. But in course of time a change took place. As the life of monks grew more common it grew less strict; indeed, it would seem that whenever any way of life which professes to be very strict becomes common, its strictness will be lessened, or given up altogether. People at first became monks because they felt that such means of holy living as they had been used to did not make them so good as they ought to be, and because they hoped to do better in this new kind of life. But when the monastic life was no longer new, monks neglected its rules.

In the unhappy period which we have now reached, the monasteries of the west had in great measure escaped the evils of war and conquest which laid waste everything around them. The barbarians, who overwhelmed the empire, generally respected them; and now the life of monks, instead of being chosen for its hardships, as it had been at first, came to be regarded as the easiest and the safest life of all. It was sought after as one which would free people from the dangers to which they would be liable if they remained in the world, and took the common share in the world's risks and troubles.

Another important matter was this—that monasticism had taken its rise in Egypt and in Syria, where the climate and the habits of the people were very

different from those of the western countries. And a great part of the monastic rules were fitted only for the particular circumstances and character of the eastern nations; for instance, they could do with less food than the people of the west, so that a writer of the fifth century said: "A large appetite is gluttony in the Greeks, but in the Gauls it is nature." Again, the Egyptians and the Syrians, in their hot climate, did not need active employment in the same way as the western nations do, in order to keep their minds and their bodies healthy. They could spend their hours and their days in calmly thinking of spiritual things, or of nothing at all, in a way which the more active mind of Europeans cannot bear. And again, many rules as to dress, which are suitable for one sort of climate, are quite unfit for a different sort.

Now, the earlier rules for monks had been drawn up either in the east or after eastern patterns. And although, when they were brought into the west, people for a time obeyed them as well as they could, it was found that they would not obey them any longer when the first heat of zeal for the monastic life had passed away. Hence it followed that, throughout the monasteries of the west, there was a general neglect of the rules by which they professed to be governed; and it was high time that there should be some reformation.

A reformer arose in the sixth century. This was Benedict, who was born near Nursia, in Italy, in the year 480. At the age of twelve he was sent to school at Rome, under the care of a nurse, as seems to have been usual in those days. He worked hard at his studies, but the bad behaviour of the other boys and young men at Rome so shocked him, that, when he had been there two years, he resolved to bear it no longer. He therefore suddenly ran away from the city, and, after his nurse had gone a considerable distance with him, he left her, and made his way into

a rough and lonely country near Subiaco, where he took up his abode in a cave. Here he was found out by a monk of a neighbouring house, named Romanus, who used daily to save part of his own allowance of food, and to carry it to his young friend. The cave opened from the face of a lofty rock, and the way that Romanus took of conveying the food to Benedict was by letting it down at the end of a string from the top of the rock.

Benedict had lived in this manner for three years when he was discovered by some shepherds, who at first took him for some wild animal; but they soon found that he was something very different. He taught them and others to whom they made his abode known, and his character came to be so much respected in the neighbourhood that he was chosen abbot of a monastery. He warned the monks that they would probably not like him, but they were resolved to have him nevertheless. Their habits, however, were so bad that Benedict felt himself obliged to check them rather sharply; and the monks then attempted to get rid of him by mixing poison in his drink. But he found out their wicked design, and the only reproof which he gave them was by reminding them how he had warned them not to make him their abbot. With this he left them to themselves, and went quietly back to his cave.

His name now grew more and more famous. Great multitudes of people flocked to see him, and even persons of high rank sent their sons to be trained under him. He built twelve monasteries, each for an abbot and twelve monks. But there was a spiteful monk, named Florentius, who would not allow him any peace so long as they were near each other; so Benedict thought it best to give way, and in 528 he left Subiaco with some companions, and, after some wanderings, arrived at Monte Cassino. There he found that the country people still worshipped some

of the old heathen gods, and that there was a grove which was held sacred to these gods. But he set boldly to work, and, notwithstanding all that could be done to oppose him, he cut down the grove, destroyed the idols, and built a little chapel, from which in time grew up a great and famous monastery, which still exists. And at Monte Cassino he drew up his Rule in the year 529; so that the beginning of the monks of St. Benedict was in the very same year in which heathen philosophy came to its end by the closing of the schools of Athens (see p. 156).

Part II

Benedict had seen the mischief which arose from too great strictness of rules. He saw how it led to open disobedience and carelessness in some, and to hypocritical pretence in others, and therefore he meant to guard against these faults by making his rule milder than those of the east. It was to be such that Europeans might keep it without danger to their health, and he allowed it to be varied according to the circumstances of the different countries in which it might be established.

Every Benedictine monastery was to be under an abbot, who was to be chosen by the monks. The brethren were to obey the abbot in everything, while the abbot was charged not to be haughty or tyrannical in using his authority. Next to the abbot there might either by a *provost,* or (which Benedict liked better) there might either be a number of *elders* or *deans,* who were to help and advise the abbot in the government of his monastery. Anyone who wished to join the order was to undergo trial for a year before admission. Those who were admitted into it were required to give in a written vow that they would continue in it, that they would amend their lives, and that they would obey those who were set over them. Every monk was obliged to give up all his property to the

order; nobody was allowed to have anything of his own, but all things were common to the brethren. The monks might not receive any presents or letters, even from their nearest relations, without the abbot's knowledge and leave, and if a present were sent for one of them, the abbot had the power to keep it from him, and to give it to any other monk.

It was one important part of the rule that the monks should have sufficient employment provided for them. They were to get up at two o'clock in the morning; they were to attend eight services a day, or, if they happened to be at a distance from their monastery, they were to observe the hours of the services by prayer; and they were to work seven hours. Portions of time were allowed for learning psalms by heart, and for reading the Scriptures, lives of holy men, and other edifying books. At meals the monks were not to talk, but some book was to be read aloud to them. Their food was to be plain and simple; no flesh was allowed, except to the sick. But all such matters were to be settled by the abbot, according to the climate and the season, to the age, the health, and the employment of the monks. Their dress was to be coarse, but was to be varied according to circumstances. They were to sleep by ten or twenty in a room, each in a separate bed, and without taking off their clothes. A dean was to have the care of each room, and a light was to be kept burning in each. No talking was to be allowed after the last service of the day.

The monks were never to go beyond the monastery without leave, and, in order that there might be little occasion for their going out, it was to contain within its walls the garden, the well, the mill, the bake-house, and other such necessary things. The abbot was to set every monk his work; if it were found that anyone was inclined to pride himself on his skill in any art, or trade, he was not to be allowed to practise it, but was obliged to take up some other employment.

Benedict died in 543, and by that time his order had made its way into France, Spain, and Sicily. It soon drew into itself all the monks of the west, except those of the British and Irish Churches, and was divided into a number of branches, which all looked up to Benedict as their founder. Through God's providence these monks became the means of great benefits to mankind. Not only were their services important for the maintenance of the Gospel where it was already planted, and for the spreading of it among the heathen, but they cleared forests, brought waste land into tillage, and did much to civilize the rude nations among which they laboured. After a time, learning began to be cultivated among them, and during the troubled ages which followed, it found a refuge in the monasteries. The monks taught the young; they copied the Scriptures and other ancient books (for printing was as yet unknown); they wrote histories of their times, and other books of their own. To them, indeed, it is that we are mainly indebted for preserving the knowledge of the past through many centuries.

CHAPTER XXX

END OF THE SIXTH CENTURY

Part I

We must not suppose that the conversion of the western barbarians was perfect. They mixed up a great deal of their own barbarism with their Christianity, and, besides this, they took up many of the vices of the old and worn-out nations, whose countries they had conquered and occupied. Much heathen superstition lingered among them; it was even a common saying in Spain, that "if a man has to pass between heathen altars and God's Church, it

is no harm if he pay his respects to both." The clergy were very wealthy and prosperous, but did not venture to interfere with the vices of the great and powerful; or, if they did, it was at their peril. For instance, when a bishop of Rouen had offended the Frankish queen Fredegund, she caused him to be murdered in his own cathedral, at the most solemn service of Easter Day.

Religion became a protection to crime; murderers were allowed to take refuge in churches, and might not be dragged out until after an oath had been made that their lives should be safe. It had been the ancient custom of the Germans to let all crimes be atoned for by the payment of money: if, for example, a person had killed another, he had no more to do than to pay a certain sum to the dead man's relations. And this way of making up for misdeeds was now brought into the Church; it was thought that men might make satisfaction for their sins by paying money, and that the effect would be the same if others paid for them after their death. We may understand how this worked from another story of Queen Fredegund, who seems to have been a perfect monster of wickedness. She set two of her pages to murder a king, named Sigebert, and, by way of encouraging them, she said that she would honour them highly if they came off with their lives; but that, if they were slain, she would lay out a great deal of money in alms for the good of their souls.

As might naturally have been expected among such people, it came to be very commonly thought that the observance of outward worship and ceremonies was all that religion required. The superstitions which had begun in the fourth century (see p. 101) continued to grow on the Church. Among other such corruptions was the excessive reverence for the *relics* of saints (that is, for parts of their bodies, or for things which had belonged to them).

But although much was amiss in the Christianity which prevailed, it yet was the means of blessing and of salvation. And there were never wanting good men who, although there were many defects and errors in their opinions, firmly held and clearly taught the necessity of a real living faith in Christ, and of a thoroughly earnest endeavour to obey God's holy will.

Part II

The state of Italy towards the end of the sixth century was very wretched. Vast numbers of its people had perished in the course of the wars by which Justinian's generals had wrested the country from the Goths, and had again united it to the empire (see p. 156); multitudes of others had been destroyed by famine and pestilence. The Lombards, who had crossed the Alps in the year 568, had obliged the emperors to yield the north, and part of the middle of Italy, to them; and they continually threatened the portions which still remained to the empire. No help against them was to be got from Constantinople; and the governors whom the emperors sent to manage their Italian dominions, instead of directing and leading the people to resist the Lombards, only hindered them from taking their defence into their own hands.

The land was left uncultivated, partly through the loss of inhabitants, and partly because those who remained were disheartened by the miseries of the time. They had not the spirit to bestow their labour on it, when there was almost a certainty that their crops would be destroyed or carried off by the Lombard invaders; and the soil, when left to itself, had in many places become so unwholesome that it was not fit to live on. Italy had in former times been so thickly peopled, that it had been necessary to get supplies of corn from Sicily and from Africa. But now such foreign supplies were wanted for a very different

reason—that the inhabitants of Italy could not, or did not, grow corn for themselves. The city of Rome had suffered from storms, and from repeated floods of the River Tiber, which did a great deal of damage to its buildings, and sometimes washed away or spoiled the stores of corn which were laid up in the granaries. The people were kept in terror by the Lombards, who often advanced to their very walls, so that it was unsafe to venture beyond the gates.

The condition of the Church, too, was very deplorable. The troubles of the times had produced a general decay of morals and public order both among the clergy and among the people. The Lombards were Arians, and religious enmity was added to the other causes of dislike between them and the Romans. In Istria, there was a division which had begun after the Fifth General Council (see p. 160), and which kept the Church of that country separate from the communion of Rome for a hundred and fifty years. The sunken condition of Christianity in Gaul (or France) has been described in the beginning of this chapter. Spain was just recovered from Arianism (see p. 147), but there was much to be done before the Catholic faith could be considered as firmly established there. In Africa, the old sect of the Donatists began again to lift up its head, and took courage from the confusions of the time to vex the Church. The churches of the east were torn by quarrels as to Eutychianism and Nestorianism. And the patriarchs of Constantinople seemed likely, with the help of the emperor's favour, to be dangerous rivals to the popes of Rome.

Such was the state of things when Gregory the Great became pope or bishop of Rome in the year 590.

CHAPTER XXXI

ST. GREGORY THE GREAT

(A.D. 540–604)

Part I

Gregory was born at Rome, of a noble and wealthy family, in the year 540. In his youth he engaged in public business, and he rose to be prætor of Rome, which was one of the chief offices under the government. In this office he was much beloved and respected by the people. But when he was about thirty-five a great change took place in his life. He resolved to forsake the pursuit of worldly honours, and spent all his wealth in founding seven monasteries. He gave up his family house at Rome to be a monastery, in which he became at first a simple monk, and was afterwards chosen abbot. A pope, named Pelagius, showed him great favour by making him his secretary and employing him for some years as a sort of ambassador at the emperor's court at Constantinople. And when Pelagius was carried off by a plague, in the year 589, the nobles, the clergy, and the people of Rome all agreed in choosing Gregory to succeed him.

Gregory was afraid to undertake the office. It was necessary that the emperor should consent to his appointment, and he wrote to beg that the emperor would refuse his consent. But the governor of Rome stopped the letter, and all the other attempts which Gregory made to escape the honour intended for him were baffled, so that in the end he was obliged to submit, and was consecrated as bishop of Rome in September, 590.

Gregory felt all the difficulties of his new place. He compares the Church to an old ship, shattered by winds and waves, decayed in its timbers, full of leaks,

and in continual danger of going to wreck. The vast quantity and variety of business which he went through is shown by the collection of his letters, of which about eight hundred and fifty still remain. We see from these how he strove to strengthen his church in all quarters, and what steps he took for the government of it. Some of the letters are addressed to emperors and kings, and treat about the greatest affairs of Church or State. And then all at once we find him passing from such high matters to direct that some poor tenant on one of his estates should be excused from paying a part of his rent, or that relief should be given to some widow or orphan who had written from a distance to ask his help.

The bishops of Rome had by degrees become very rich. They had estates, not only in Italy and Sicily, but in Africa, in France, and even in Asia. And the people who managed these estates were employed by Gregory to carry on his other business in the same countries and to report the state of the Church to him from all quarters. Very little of his large income was spent on himself. We may have some notion of the plain way in which the great bishop lived from one of his letters to the steward of his estates in Sicily. "You have sent me," says Gregory, "one wretched horse and five good asses. I cannot ride the horse because he is wretched; nor the good beasts, because they are but asses." He lived chiefly in the company of monks and clergy, employing himself in study with them. And, in the midst of all the business which took up his time, he wrote a number of books, of which some are very valuable. He was also famous as a preacher. Among his sermons are a set of twenty-two on the prophet Ezekiel, which he had meant to carry further. But he was obliged to break off by the attacks of the Lombards, as he told his people in the end of the last sermon: "Let no one blame me," he says, "if after this discourse I stop, since, as you

all see, our troubles are multiplied on us. On every side we are surrounded with swords; on every side we dread the danger of death which is close at hand. Some come back to us with their hands cut off; we hear of some as being taken prisoners, and of others as slain. I am forced to withhold my tongue from expounding, since my soul is weary of my life (Job x. 1). How can I, who am forced daily to drink bitter things, draw forth sweet things to you? What remains for us, but that in the chastisement which we are suffering because of our misdeeds, we should give thanks with weeping to Him who made us, and who hath bestowed on us the spirit of adoption (Rom. viii. 15)—to Him who sometimes nourisheth His children with bread, and sometimes correcteth them with a scourge—who, by benefits and by sufferings alike, is training us for an eternal inheritance?"

Gregory laboured zealously in improving the education of the clergy and in reforming such disorders as he found in the Church. He founded a school for singing, and is said to have established a new way of chanting, which from him has the name of the *Gregorian Chant,* and is used to this day. We are told that the whip with which he used to correct his choristers was kept at Rome as a relic for hundreds of years.

His charities were very great. On the first day of every month he gave out large quantities of provisions to the people of Rome. The old nobility had suffered so much by the wars and by the loss of their estates in countries which had been torn from them by the barbarians, that many of them were glad to come in for a share of the good pope's bounty. Every day he sent relief to a number of poor persons in all parts of the city, and he used to send dishes from his own table to those whom he knew to be in distress, but ashamed to ask for assistance. Once when a poor man was found dead in the streets, Gregory denied himself

Holy Communion for some days, because it seemed to him that he must be in some measure to blame. He used to receive strangers and wanderers at his own table, out of regard for our Lord's words : " Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me" (St. Matt. xxv. 40).

Part II

Having thus seen something of Gregory's life at home, we must now look at his proceedings in other quarters.

He had a sharp dispute with John the Faster, Patriarch of Constantinople, on account of the title of *Universal Bishop*, which the patriarchs of the eastern capital had for some time taken to themselves. When we hear such a title, we may naturally fancy that it signified a claim to authority over the whole Church on earth. But, as it was then used, it really had no such meaning. The Greeks were fond of lofty and sounding titles, which seemed to mean much more than they were really understood to mean. This fondness appears in the titles of the emperors and of the officers of their empire, and it was by it that the patriarchs were led to style themselves " Universal Bishop." If the title had been intended as a claim to authority over all Churches, it could only have been given to one person at a time; but we find that the emperor Justinian gave it to the bishops of both Constantinople and of Rome, and that he styled each of them " Head of all the Churches," and whatever the patriarchs of Constantinople may have meant by it, they certainly did not make any claim to authority over Rome or the other western churches.

But there was an old jealousy between the sees of Rome and Constantinople ever since the time when the Second General Council, in 381, gave the bishop of Constantinople the second place of honour in the

whole Church (see p. 94). This jealousy had grown greater in recent times, when there was no very kindly feeling between the emperors and their Italian subjects, and when it seemed not impossible that the bishop of the new capital, backed by the emperor, might even try to dispute the first place with the bishop of Rome. And Gregory, who did not understand the Greek language, or how little the Greeks meant by their fine titles, was ready to take offence at the name of "Universal Bishop." So, when the Patriarch John the Faster styled himself so on an important occasion, Gregory objected strongly. He wrote to John, to the emperor, and to the patriarchs of Alexandria and of Antioch, declaring that the title was proud and foolish, that it came from the devil, and was a token of Antichrist's approach, and that it was unfit for any Christian bishop to use. The emperor, however, would not help him against the patriarch. John would not yield, and the other eastern patriarchs (partly from a wish to be at peace and partly because the words did not seem offensive to them, as they did to Gregory), were little disposed to take up his quarrel. After a time another emperor, who had special reasons for wishing to stand well with Gregory, forbade the successor of John to call himself "Universal"; but the title was soon restored by the emperors to the bishops of Constantinople, although not until after the death of Gregory. The most curious part of the story, however, is this: Gregory's successors in the papacy have taken up the very title which he condemned so strongly, but, instead of using it in the harmless meaning which it had in the east, they have intended it as a claim to power over the whole Church—that claim of which the very notion filled Gregory with such horror and indignation, and which he declared to be unfit for any bishop to make.

Part III

Gregory did much to bring over the Lombards from their Arianism, and he succeeded in part, although the work was not completed until after his time. He also laboured earnestly to revive the Church in France and in other countries. But the chief work which he did was in spreading the Gospel; and it is one which very much concerns ourselves.

In those days slavery was common throughout all the known world, and, although the Gospel had wrought a great improvement in the treatment of slaves, by making the masters feel that they and their slaves were brethren in Christ, it yet had not forbidden slavery. But there was a feeling of pity for those who fell into this condition by the chances of war or otherwise. It was a common act of charity for good Christians to redeem captives and to set them at liberty. This, indeed, was thought so holy a work, and so agreeable to the words of Scripture—"I will have mercy, and not sacrifice" (Hos. vi. 6; St. Matt. ix. 13)—that bishops often broke up and sold even the consecrated plate of their churches in order that they might get the means of ransoming captives whom they heard of. And, although slavery was still allowed by the laws of Christian kingdoms, those laws took care that Christian slaves should not be under Jews, or masters of any other than their own religion.

Gregory, then, while he was yet only a monk, went one day into the market at Rome, just after the arrival of some merchants with a large cargo of slaves for sale. Some of them, perhaps, had been taken in war; others had probably been sold by their own parents for the sake of the price which they fetched, for we are told that this practice was not uncommon among some of the ruder nations. As Gregory looked at them his eyes fell on some boys with whose appear-

ance he was greatly struck. Their skin was fair, unlike the dark complexions of the Italians and other southern nations whom he had been used to see. Their features were beautiful, and they had long, fair hair. He asked the merchants from what land these boys had been brought. "From Britain," they said; and they told him that the fair complexion which he admired so much was common among the people of that island. Perhaps Gregory had never thought of Britain before. It was nearly two hundred years since the Roman troops had been withdrawn from it, and its inhabitants had been left to themselves. And since that time the pagan English had overrun it; the Romans had lost the countries which lay between them and it, and Britain had quite disappeared from their knowledge. Gregory, therefore, was obliged to ask whether the people were Christians or heathens, and he was told that they were still heathens. The good monk sighed deeply. "Alas, and woe!" said he, "that people with such faces of light should belong to the author of darkness, and that so goodly an outward favour should be void of inward grace." He asked what was the name of their nation, and was told that they were "Angli" or English. "It is well," he said, "for they have *angels'* faces, and such as they ought to be joint-heirs with the angels in heaven. What is the name of the province from which they come?" He was told that it was Deira (an English kingdom, which stretched along the eastern side of Britain, from the Humber to the Tyne). The name of Deira sounded to Gregory's ears like two Latin words, which mean "from wrath." "Well, again," he said, "they are delivered *from the wrath* of God, and are called to the mercy of Christ. What is the name of the king of that country?" "Aella," was the answer. "Alleluia!" (*Praise to God!*) exclaimed Gregory; "the praises of God their maker ought to be sung in that kingdom."

He went at once to the pope, and asked leave to go as a missionary to the heathen of Britain. But, although the pope consented, the people of Rome were so much attached to Gregory that they would not allow him to set out, and he was obliged to give up the plan. Yet he did not forget the heathen of Britain, and when he became pope, although he could not himself go to them, he was able to send others for the work of their conversion.

An opening had been made by the marriage of Ethelbert, king of Kent, the English kingdom which lay nearest to the Continent, with Bertha, daughter of Charibert, a Frankish king, whose capital was Paris (A.D. 570). As Charibert and his family were Christians, it had been agreed that the young queen should be allowed freely to practise her religion, and a French bishop, named Luidhard, came to England with her, and acted as her chaplain. Ethelbert, by degrees, became much more powerful than he was at the time of his marriage, and in 593 he was chosen Bretwalda, which was the title given to the chief of the English kings. This office gave him much influence over most of the other kingdoms, so that, if his favour could be gained, it was likely to be of very great advantage for recommending the Gospel to others. But Ethelbert was still a heathen, after having been married to Bertha about five-and-twenty years, although we may well suppose that she had sometimes spoken to him of her religion, and had tried to bring him over to it. And perhaps Bertha may have had a share in sending Gregory the reports which he mentions, that the English were ready to receive the Gospel, and in begging him to take pity on them.

Part IV

In the year 596 Gregory sent off a party of monks as missionaries to the English. The head of them was

Augustine, who had been provost (that is, the highest person after the abbot) (see p. 164) of the monastery to which the pope himself had formerly belonged. And, at the same time, Gregory directed the manager of his estates in France to buy up a number of captive English youths, and to place them in monasteries, that they might learn the Christian faith, and might afterwards become missionaries to their own countrymen.

When Augustine and his brethren had got as far as the south of France, they heard many terrible stories of the English, so they took fright at the thought of going among such savages, whose very language was unknown to them; and Augustine went back to Rome to beg that they might be allowed to give up their undertaking. But Gregory would not consent to this. He encouraged them to go on, and he gave Augustine letters to some Frankish kings and bishops, desiring them to assist the missionaries, and to supply them with interpreters who understood the language of the English. Augustine, therefore, returned to the place where he had left his companions. They made their way across France, and in 597 he landed, with about forty monks, in the Isle of Thanet.

Ethelbert lived at Canterbury, the capital of the Kentish kingdom, at no great distance from the place where the missionaries had landed. On receiving notice of their arrival, he sent to desire that they would remain where they were until he should visit them; and within a few days he went to them. The meeting was held in the open air; for Ethelbert had a superstitious fear that they might do him some mischief by magical arts, if he were to trust himself under a roof with them. The missionaries advanced in procession, with a silver cross borne before them, and displaying a picture of the crucified Saviour; and, as they slowly moved onwards, they chanted a prayer for their own salvation and that of the people to

whom they had been sent. Ethelbert received them courteously, and desired them to sit down; and then Augustine made a speech, telling the king that they were come to preach the word of life to him and to his subjects. "These are, indeed, fair words and promises which you bring with you," said Ethelbert; "but, because they are new and uncertain, I cannot at once take up with them, and leave the faith which I and all my people have so long observed. But as you have come from far, and as I think you wish to give us a share in things which you believe to be true and most profitable, we will not show you unkindness, but rather will receive you hospitably, and not hinder you from converting as many as you can to your religion."

He then granted them a lodging in his capital, and ordered that they should be supplied with all that they might need. As they drew near to Canterbury, they again displayed the silver cross, and the banner on which the Saviour was painted; and they entered the city in procession, chanting a litany which Gregory had made for the people of Rome, during the great plague which carried off Pope Pelagius.

A little way outside the city they found a small church, which had been built in the days of the old British Church, and in which Luidhard had since held his service for Queen Bertha and the Christians of her court. It was called by the name of St. Martin; for even before the English invasion his name had become so famous that many churches were called after it; and we may well believe that Queen Bertha, on arriving from France, was glad to find that the church in which she was to worship had long ago been named in honour of the great saint of her own land. There Augustine and his brethren now held their service; and the sight of their holy, gentle, and self-denying lives soon drew many to receive their instructions. Ethelbert himself was baptized on Whit-

Sunday, 597, and, although he would not force his people to profess the Gospel, he declared himself desirous of their conversion.

Gregory had desired Augustine, if he met with success in the beginning of his mission, to return from Britain into France and be consecrated as an archbishop for the English. He now obeyed this direction, and was consecrated at Arles; and without any delay he again crossed the sea, and renewed his labours among the English. Such was his progress in the work of conversion, that at Christmas of the year in which he first landed in Britain ten thousand persons were baptized in one day. Four years later, Gregory sent him a fresh body of clergy to help him, with a large supply of books, vestments, and other things for the service of the Church. He also gave him instructions how to proceed, so as to advance the true faith without giving needless offence to the prejudices of the heathen.

Augustine's chief difficulties, indeed, were not with the English, but with the clergy of the ancient British Church, whom he could not succeed in bringing to an agreement. We must not lay the blame wholly on either side; if the Britons were somewhat jealous and obstinate, Augustine seems to have taken too much upon himself in his way of dealing with them. But, whatever his faults may have been, we are bound to hold his memory in honour for the zealous and successful labours by which the Gospel was a second time introduced into the southern part of this island. He is rightly called the Apostle of England, for he was the first to preach the Gospel to the English. We keep his festival on May 26. Before his death, in 604, he had established a second bishop for Kent, in the city of Rochester, and one at London, which was then the capital of the kingdom of Essex. And by degrees, partly by the followers of St. Augustine and other missionaries from the Continent, and partly by the

Irish monks of Iona (see p. 152), all the kingdoms of England were converted to the Christian faith.

In the same year as Augustine, Gregory also died, after a long and severe illness, which obliged him for years to keep his bed, but could not check his activity in watching over the interests of religion. The English long held him in honour as "Gregory, our father, who sent us baptism." He is commemorated in our Prayer-Book on March 12.

Gregory had intended that Augustine should be archbishop of London, because in the old Roman days London had been the chief city of Britain; and it might seem natural that the chief bishop of the English Church should now take his title from the capital of all England. But when Gregory sent forth his missionaries he did not know that Britain had been divided by the English into several kingdoms. In consequence of this division of the country, Augustine, instead of becoming archbishop of London, fixed himself in the capital of Kent, the first kingdom which he converted, and then the most powerful of all. Hence it is that his successors, the Primates of All England, to this day, are not archbishops of London, but of Canterbury.

And, although Canterbury is not now a very large town, it is a very interesting place, and is full of memorials of its first archbishop. The noble cathedral, called Christ Church, stands in the same place as an ancient Roman-British church which Augustine recovered from heathen uses and consecrated in honour of the Saviour. Close to it is the archbishop's palace, built on the same ground as the palace of Ethelbert, which he gave up to the missionaries. A little church of St. Martin still stands on a rising ground outside the city, on the spot where Bertha and Luidhard had worshipped before the arrival of Augustine, and where he and his brethren celebrated their earliest services. And, although it has

been rebuilt since then, we may still see in its walls a number of bricks which by their appearance are known to be Roman—the very same materials of which the little church was built at first, while the Romans were yet in Britain, fifteen centuries and a half ago; nay, it is even supposed that some part of the masonry is Roman, too. Between St. Martin's and the cathedral lay the great monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul, which Augustine began to build. He died before it was finished; but, as soon as it was ready, his body was removed to it, and in it Queen Bertha and her husband were afterwards buried. After a time the name of the monastery was changed to St. Augustine's. The Reformation in the sixteenth century put an end to monasteries; and the buildings of St. Augustine's went through many changes, until in the year 1844 the place was turned to a purpose similar to that which Augustine and Gregory had at heart when they undertook the conversion of England; for it is now a college for training missionaries. Within its grounds are the tombs of the earliest Christian kings and bishops of our race. Nor is Gregory forgotten in the city which owes so much to him; for a beautiful little church called by his name has been built, not very far from the college of St. Augustine.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
BILLING AND SONS, LTD., GUILDFORD AND ESHER

SKETCHES OF CHURCH HISTORY

BY

J. C. ROBERTSON, M.A.

CANON OF CANTERBURY

REVISED BY C. B. MOSS, M.A.

LATE SCHOLAR OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD

PART II.—FROM A.D. 604 TO THE REFORMATION

LONDON

SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE

NEW YORK AND TORONTO: THE MACMILLAN CO.

First published 1878
New edition, revised, 1929

Printed in Great Britain

CONTENTS

PART II

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	Mohammedanism	1
II.	The Church in England	3
III.	St. Boniface	6
IV.	Pepin and Charles the Great—Part I.	10
	,, ,, Part II.	12
V.	Decay of Charles the Great's Empire	16
VI.	State of the Papacy	19
VII.	Missions of the Ninth and Tenth Centuries ...	21
VIII.	Pope Gregory VII.—The Great Schism—Part I. ...	27
	,, ,, Part II. ...	29
	,, ,, Part III.	31
	,, ,, Part IV.	33
	,, ,, Part V. ...	34
IX.	The First Crusade—Part I.	36
	,, Part II.	39
	,, Part III.	42
X.	New Orders of Monks—Military Orders	43
XI.	St. Bernard—Part I.	50
	,, Part II.	52
XII.	Hadrian IV.—Alexander III.—Becket—The Third Crusade	53
XIII.	Innocent III.—Part I.	57
	,, Part II.	60
	,, Part III.	64
	,, Part IV.	66
XIV.	Frederick II.—St. Louis of France—Part I. ...	69
	,, ,, ,, Part II. ...	70
	,, ,, ,, Part III. ...	72
XV.	Peter of Murrone	74
XVI.	Boniface VIII.—Part I.	77
	,, Part II.	79

CHAPTER		PAGE
XVII.	The Popes at Avignon—The Ruin of the Templars—Part I.	82
	Part II.	83
XVIII.	The Popes at Avignon (*continued*)	88
XIX.	Religious Sects and Parties	90
XX.	John Wyclif	92
XXI.	The Popes return to Rome	96
XXII.	The Great Schism of the West	97
XXIII.	John Huss	99
XXIV.	The Council of Constance—Part I.	102
	,, ,, Part II.	104
	,, ,, Part III.	106
XXV.	The Hussites	108
XXVI.	Councils of Basel and Florence	110
XXVII.	Nicolas V. and Pius II.	113
XXVIII.	Jerome Savonarola—Part I.	116
	,, ,, Part II.	118
XXIX.	Julius II. and Leo X.	120
XXX.	Missions—The Inquisition	122

TABLE OF DATES

PART II

A.D.	PAGE
589–615. Missionary labours of St. Columbanus	44
612. Mohammed begins to publish his religion	1
622. Flight of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina (Hegira) ...	2
632. Death of Mohammed	2
635. Settlement of Scottish missionaries in Holy Island ...	4
664. Council of Whitby	5
724. Beginning of controversy as to images	2
732. Victory of Charles Martel over the Saracens	7
734. Death of the Venerable Bede	6
715–755. Missionary labours of St. Boniface	7
752. Pepin becomes king of the Franks	10
787. Second Council of Nicæa (Seventh General Council) ...	15
794. Council of Frankfort	15
800. Charles the Great crowned as emperor	11
— (*about*). Forgery of Constantine's donation	28
814. Death of Charles the Great	15
826–865. Missionary labours of Anskar	23
846 (*about*). Forgery of the False Decretals	28
860–870. Conversion of Bulgarians, Moravians, Bohemians, etc.	21
912. Foundation of the Order of Cluny	45
962. Otto I., emperor	18
988. Conversion of Vladimir, great prince of Russia ...	24
999. Sylvester II., pope	19
994–1030. Conversion of Norwegians	25
1048. Pope Leo IX.—Beginning of Hildebrand's influence over the papacy	29
1054. Final schism between Rome and Constantinople ...	35
1073. Hildebrand elected pope (Gregory VII.)	30
1074. Foundation of the Carthusian Order	46
1085. Death of Gregory VII.	34
1098. Foundation of the Cistercian Order	47
1099. Jerusalem taken in the First Crusade	41
1113. Order of St. John (or Hospitallers) founded	48
1116. Order of the Temple founded	49
1123. Agreement between the pope and the emperor at Worms	36
1147–1149. The Second Crusade	52
1153. Death of St. Bernard	53

A.D.		PAGE
1154.	Nicolas Breakspeare, an Englishman, chosen pope (Hadrian IV.)	53
1170.	Murder of Archbishop Thomas Becket	56
1189.	The Third Crusade	56
1198.	Innocent III. elected pope	57
1203.	Constantinople taken by Crusaders	62
1208.	England put under an interdict	59
1208–1229.	War against the Albigenses	64
1215.	Fourth Council of the Lateran—Innocent sanctions the Dominican and Franciscan Orders of Mendicant Friars	68
1240.	First Crusade of St. Louis	72
1270.	Second Crusade and death of St. Louis	73
1274.	Second Council of Lyons	74
1294.	Election of Pope Celestine V.	75
——	Election of Pope Boniface VIII.	77
1300.	Boniface celebrates the first jubilee	77
1303.	Death of Boniface	81
1310.	The popes settle at Avignon	82
1312.	Council of Vienne—The Order of the Temple dissolved ...	86
1377.	Gregory XI. removes the papacy from Avignon to Rome	97
1378.	Beginning of the Great Schism of the West	97
1384.	Death of John Wyclif	95
1414–1418.	Council of Constance	102
1415.	Pope John XXIII. deposed	104
——	John Huss burnt by order of the Council	105
1417.	Election of Pope Martin V., and end of the Schism ...	107
1418.	Religious war of Bohemia breaks out	109
1431.	Council of Basel opened	110
1438.	Council of Ferrara and Florence	112
1453.	Constantinople taken by the Turks	113
1455.	Invention of Printing	114
1464.	Pope Pius II. vainly attempts a crusade	115
1498.	Death of Savonarola	120
1503.	Death of Pope Alexander VI.	120
1517.	Appearance of Martin Luther as a reformer	122

NOTE

References to Part I. appear thus: "I., 152"; to Part II. thus: "II., 6."

CHAPTER I

MOHAMMEDANISM

(A.D. 612–794)

Up to this time the Christian Church had only had to fight against heathenism, Judaism, and false or heretical forms of Christianity. Over all these, the victory had been won. Judaism was not now a serious rival. The heathen empire had become nominally Christian: so had the barbarian tribes which had overrun it. The various heretical sects, though still in existence, were not dangerous, except where, as in Egypt, heresy had become the excuse and the slogan of a national movement. But now the Church had to meet a far more formidable adversary. Hitherto Christianity had been advancing steadily forward. But now we are to see it driven backward, century after century, before the advancing armies of its rival. There are to-day many countries—Palestine, Egypt, Syria, North Africa, Asia Minor, and others—which were once Christian, but are now Moslem. There is no country, except Spain, which has been Moslem and is now Christian. From the seventh century onward we see the Christian Church gradually retreating: and but little of the lost ground has been recovered.

Mohammed, the founder of this new religion, was an Arab of the tribe of the Koreish, who were the guardians of the Holy Stone at Mecca. The Arabs were heathen, and the Holy Stone was the centre to which pilgrims came from all parts of Arabia. Mohammed believed that God had commissioned him to restore to the world the knowledge of the true re-

ligion, which he called Islam (that is, resignation to the Will of God)—that there is only one God, who forbids idolatry, and summons mankind, by the mouth of Mohammed His prophet, to accept His revelation. Mohammed's teaching was accepted by his wife, Khadija, and a few others: they had to flee from Mecca and take refuge in Medina, and from this flight, which is called the Hegira, the Mohammedan era is dated, as the Christian era is from the supposed date of our Lord's birth.

Mohammed soon became the master of Medina, then of Mecca, and finally of all Arabia. As he grew more powerful, his character lost its early simplicity. After the death of Khadija, he married many other wives; he became cruel, treacherous, and lustful; some of his later "revelations" were evidently manufactured to enable him to carry out the policy of the moment. His followers were called Moslems or Mussulmans, and after his death they collected his prophecies into the book called the Korān. The religion of this book is partly derived from the Old Testament, partly from corrupt and heretical forms of Christianity, and partly from Mohammed's own ideas and from those of the Arabs at that period. Islam rejects the doctrines of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Atonement, and teaches a rigid fatalism. The God of Mohammed is not a loving Father, but an almighty Sultan, who made some men for sensual delights in heaven, and others to burn everlastingly in hell. According to Mohammed, Jesus Christ was a great prophet, and was born of a Virgin: but He was not the Son of God, nor did He die on the cross, but was caught up to heaven, and His place on the cross was taken by Simon of Cyrene. The Korān gives its full approval to polygamy, concubinage, divorce, slavery, and war against unbelievers.

Mohammed died in 632. Immediately afterwards the Arabs attacked both the Roman and the Persian

Empires. The Persian kingdom was destroyed, and the old Persian religion with it; most of the Persians who refused to accept Islam took refuge in India, where their descendants are called Parsees. Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and the whole of North Africa were conquered by the Moslems. Many Christians gave up their religion, and the rest were reduced to the position of a subject race, forbidden to bear arms, and compelled to pay tribute, and to submit to various insulting laws and restrictions. Unhappily, the Moslem conquest was made easier in Syria and Egypt by the quarrels between the orthodox Greeks and the Monophysite natives. The great African Church, which had produced Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine, diminished rapidly, and at length ceased to exist.

The Arabs overran Asia Minor, and attacked Constantinople, but they were driven back behind the Taurus Mountains, and Asia Minor remained Christian for some centuries longer. At the other end of Europe, the Moslems conquered nearly the whole of Spain: from which they were not driven out till 1492. In 732, just a hundred years after Mohammed's death, an Arab army in the west invaded France, and another in the east was threatening India, both being subject to the Khalif, or successor of Mohammed, whose capital was Damascus.

CHAPTER II

THE CHURCH IN ENGLAND

(A.D. 604–734)

WHILE the light of the Gospel was darkened by the Moslem conquests in some parts of the world where it had once shone brightly, it was spreading widely among the tribes which had overrun western Europe.

In England the whole people was converted; partly by the successors of St. Augustine and other missionaries from the Continent (such as St. Birinus, who settled at Dorchester on the Thames, and St. Felix, who evangelized Norfolk and Suffolk); and partly by Irish missionaries from Iona. There, as we have seen (I., 152), an Irish abbot, named Columba, had settled with some companions about the year 565, and from Iona their teaching had been carried all over the northern part of Britain. These missionaries from Iona to England found a home in the island of Lindisfarne, on the Northumbrian coast, which was given to them by St. Oswald, king of Northumbria, and from them got the name of Holy Island. Oswald himself had been converted while an exile in Scotland: and, as he had learnt the Irish or Gaelic language there, he often helped the missionaries in their labours by interpreting what they said into the language of his own subjects who listened to them. The first bishop and abbot of Lindisfarne was St. Aidan. When King Oswald asked for a mission from Iona, the first leader who was sent came back in despair; but Aidan rose and counselled him to have more patience and to approach the heathen English with sympathy and not with abuse, whereupon the monks agreed to send Aidan in his place. The Irish missionaries carried their labours even as far south as the River Thames; and their modest and humble ways gained the respect and love of the people so much that, as we are told by the Venerable Bede, wherever one of them appeared, he was joyfully received as the servant of God. Even those who met them on the road used eagerly to ask their blessing, and, whenever one of them came to any village, the inhabitants flocked to hear from him the message of the Gospel.

But these Irish missionaries differed in some respects from the clergy who were connected with St. Augustine; and after a time a great meeting was held

at Whitby, in Yorkshire, to settle the questions between them and the Roman Church. We must not suppose that these differences were of any real importance, for they were only about such small matters as the reckoning of the day on which Easter should be kept, and the way in which the hair of the clergy should be clipped or shaved. But, although these were mere trifles, the two parties were each so set on their own ways that no agreement could be come to, and the end was, that the Irish missionaries went back to Iona, and did no more work for spreading the Gospel in England, although after a while the monks of Iona, and those of Ireland too, were persuaded to shave their hair and to reckon their Easter in the same way as the other clergy of the west. St. Wilfrid, who had been the chief speaker at the conference of Whitby in support of the Roman date for Easter, and who was afterwards bishop of York, preached the Gospel to the men of Sussex, which was the last part of England to remain heathen. The various missions to the English were gathered into one national church by Archbishop Theodore. This great man was a Greek of Tarsus, and was sent by Pope Hadrian to be archbishop of Canterbury. He held the first synod of the Church of England in 673, at Hertford. These synods have continued ever since; when the bishopric of York was made an archbishopric, there was a separate synod for the province of York. These provincial synods are now called the convocations. Thus you see that the Church of England and her synods are centuries older than either the Monarchy or Parliament. It was not the nation that made the Church, it was very largely the Church that made the English nation.

In those times some of the most learned and famous men were English monks. Among them we shall only mention Bede, who is commonly called the Venerable, and to whose care we owe almost all our knowledge

of the early history of the Church in England. Bede was born about the year 673, near Jarrow, in Northumbria, and at the age of seven he entered the monastery of Jarrow, where the rest of his life was spent. He tells us of himself that he made it his pleasure every day "either to learn or to teach or to write something"; and, after having written many valuable books during his quiet life in his cell at Jarrow, including the Church History of England, he died on the eve of Ascension Day in the year 734, just as he had finished a translation of St. John's Gospel into English. He is commemorated in the English Prayer-Book on May 27.

CHAPTER III

ST. BONIFACE

(A.D. 680–755)

THE enthusiasm which led some of the monks of Ireland to fill the islands of the northern seas with their cells led others to undertake missionary work on the Continent; and by them and others much was done for the conversion of various tribes in Germany and in the Netherlands. But the most famous missionary of those times was an Englishman named Winfrid, who is styled the Apostle of Germany.

Winfrid was born near Crediton, in Devonshire, about the year 680. He became a monk at an early age, and perhaps it was then that he took the name of Boniface, by which he is best known. He might probably have risen to a high place in the church of his own country if he had wished to do so; but he was filled with a glowing desire to preach the Gospel to the heathen. He therefore refused all the tempting offers which were made to him at home, crossed the sea, and began to labour in Friesland and about the

lower part of the Rhine. For three years he assisted another famous English missionary, Willibrord,[1] bishop of Utrecht, sometimes called the Apostle of Holland, who wished to make Boniface his successor; but Boniface thought that he was bound rather to labour in some country where his work was more needed, so, leaving Willibrord, he went into Hesse, where he made and baptized many thousands of converts. The pope, Gregory the Second, on hearing of this success, invited him to Rome, consecrated him as a bishop, and sent him back with letters recommending him to the princes and people of the countries in which his work was to lie (A.D. 723).

At this time the Frankish kings, instead of carrying on the government for themselves, and leading their nation in war, were shut up in their palaces, except that once in the year they were brought out in a cart drawn by bullocks to appear at the national assemblies. These poor "faineants" or "do-nothings" (as the kings of the first French dynasty are called) were without any strength or spirit. They allowed their hair to grow without being shorn; and the Greeks, who lived far away from them and knew them only by hearsay, believed, not only that their hair was long, but that it grew down their backs like the bristles of a hog. And, while the kings had sunk into this pitiable state, the real work of the kingly office was done, and the kingly power was enjoyed, by great officers who were called mayors of the palace.

At the time of which we are speaking, the mayor of the palace was Charles, who was afterwards known by the name of Martel, or *The Hammer*. Charles had done a great service to Christendom by defeating a vast army of Moslems, who had forced their way from Spain into the heart of France, and driving the remains of them back across the Pyrenees. It is said

[1] St. Willibrord came from Yorkshire: he is commemorated on November 7.

that they lost 375,000 men in the battle which they fought with Charles at Tours (A.D. 732); and, although this number is no doubt beyond the truth, it is certain that the Moslems were so much weakened that they never ventured to attempt any more conquests in western Europe. But, although Charles had thus done very great things for the Christian world, it would seem that he himself did not care much for religion; and, although he gave Boniface a letter of protection, he did not help or encourage him greatly in his missionary labours. But Boniface was resolved to carry on bravely what he believed to be God's work. He preached in Hesse and Thuringia, and made many thousands of converts. He built churches and monasteries, and brought over from England priests to help him in preaching and in the Christian training of his converts, for which purpose he also obtained supplies of books from his own country. He founded bishoprics, and held councils of the clergy and laity for the settlement of the Church's affairs. Finding that the Hessians paid reverence to an old oak-tree, which was sacred to one of their gods, he resolved to cut it down. The heathen stood around, looking fiercely at him, cursing and threatening him, and expecting to see him and his companions struck dead by the vengeance of their gods. But when he had only just begun to attack the oak we are told that a great wind suddenly arose, and struck it, so that it fell to the ground in four pieces. The people, seeing this, took it for a sign from heaven, and consented to give up their old idolatry; and Boniface turned the wood of the huge old oak to use by building a chapel with it.

In some places Boniface found a strange mixture of heathen superstitions with Christianity, and he did all that he could to root them out. He had also much trouble with missionaries from Ireland, whose discipline and practice differed in some things from

his; and perhaps he did not always treat them with so much of wisdom and gentleness as might have been wished. But after all he was right in thinking that the sight of two Christian missions, different from each other and opposed to each other, must puzzle the heathen and hinder their conversion; so that we can understand his jealousy of those Irish missionaries, even if we cannot wholly approve of it.

In reward of his labours and success, Boniface was made an archbishop by Pope Gregory III. in 732; and, although at first he was not fixed in any one place, he soon brought the German Church into such a state of order that it seemed to be time for choosing some city as the seat of its chief bishop, just as the chief bishop of England was settled at Canterbury. Boniface himself wished to fix himself at Cologne; but at that very time the bishop of Mainz got into trouble by killing a Saxon, who, in a former war, had killed the bishop's father. Although it had been quite a common thing in those rough days for bishops to take a part in fighting, Boniface and his councils had made rules forbidding such things, as unbecoming the ministers of peace; and the case of the bishop of Mainz, coming just after those rules had been made, could not well be passed over. The bishop, therefore, was obliged to give up his see, and Mainz was chosen to be the place where Boniface should be fixed as archbishop and primate of Germany, having under him five bishops, and all the country which had received the Gospel through his preaching.

When Boniface had grown old, he felt himself again drawn to Friesland, where, as we have seen (II., 6), he had laboured in his early life; and at the age of seventy-five he left his archbishopric, with all that invited him to spend his last days there in quiet and honour, that he might once more go forth as a missionary to the barbarous Frieslanders. Among them he preached with much success; but on Whitsun eve,

755, while he was expecting a great number of his converts to meet, that they might receive confirmation from him, he and his companions were attacked by an armed party of heathens, and all the missionaries, fifty-two in number, were martyred. But although Boniface thus ended his active and useful life by martyrdom at the hands of those whom he wished to bring into the way of salvation, his work was carried on by other missionaries, and the conversion of the Frisians was completed not long afterwards. Boniface's body was carried up the Rhine, and was buried at Fulda, a monastery which he had founded amidst the loneliness of a vast forest; and there the tomb of the "Apostle of the Germans" was visited with reverence for centuries. The church of his native country still commemorates him in her kalendar on June 5.

CHAPTER IV

PEPIN AND CHARLES THE GREAT
(A.D. 741–814)

Part I

Towards the end of St. Boniface's life, a great change took place in the government of the Franks. Pepin, who had succeeded his father, Charles Martel, as mayor of the palace, grew tired of being called a servant while he was really the master; and the Franks sent to ask the pope, whose name was Zacharias, whether the man who really had the kingly power ought not also to have the title of king. Zacharias, who had been greatly obliged to the Franks for helping him against his enemies, the Lombards, answered them in the way that they seemed to wish and to expect; and accordingly they chose Pepin as their king. And while, according to

the custom in such cases, Pepin was lifted up on a shield and displayed to the people, while he was anointed and crowned, the last of the poor old race of "do-nothing" kings was forced to let his long hair be shorn until he looked like a monk, and was then shut up in a monastery for the rest of his days.

Pepin afterwards went into Italy for the help of the pope, and bestowed on the Roman Church a large tract of country which he had taken from the Lombards. And this *donation* (as it was called), or gift, was the first land which the popes possessed in such a way that they were counted as the sovereigns of it.

Pepin died in 768, and was succeeded by his son Charles, who is commonly called Charlemagne (or Charles the Great). Under Charles the connexion between the Franks and the popes became still closer than before; and when Charles put down the Lombard kingdom in Italy (A.D. 774), the popes came in for part of the spoil.

But the most remarkable effect of this connexion was at a later time, when Pope Leo III. had been attacked in a Roman street by some conspirators, who tried to blind him and to cut out his tongue. But they were not able to do their work thoroughly, and Leo recovered the use both of his tongue and of his eyes. He then went into Germany to ask Charles to help him against his enemies; and on his return to Rome he was followed by Charles. There, on Christmas Day, A.D. 800, when a vast congregation was assembled in the great church of St. Peter, the pope suddenly placed a golden crown on the king's head, while the people shouted: "Long life and victory to our emperor, Charles!" So now, after a long time, an emperor was set up again in the West; and, although these new emperors were German, they all styled themselves emperors of the Romans. The popes afterwards claimed that they had a right to bestow the empire as they liked, and that Leo had

taken it from the Greeks and given it to the Germans. But this was not correct. At this time the empress Irene was reigning at Constantinople, having dethroned her son: no woman had ever before reigned over the empire, and the pope declared that the throne was vacant, while the attacks of the khalif Haroun-al-Raschid (known to us from the "Arabian Nights") prevented Irene from asserting her claim in the West. Charles seems to have made up his mind to be emperor, but he was very angry with the pope for giving him the crown by surprise, instead of letting him take his own way about it; and, if he had been left to himself, he would have taken care to manage the matter so that the pope should not appear to do anything more than to crown him in form after he had been chosen by the Roman people.

Part II

Charles was really a great man, although he had very serious faults, and did many blameable things. He carried his conquests so far that the Greeks had a proverb: "Have the Frank for thy friend, but not for thy neighbour"—meaning that the Franks were likely to try to make their neighbours' lands their own. He thought it his duty to spread the Christian faith by force, if it could not be done in a gentler way; and thus, when he had conquered the Saxons in Germany, he made them be baptized and pay tithes to the Church. But people's belief is not to be forced in this way; and many of those who submitted to be baptized at the conqueror's command had no belief in the Gospel, and no understanding of it. There is a story told of some who came to be baptized over and over again for the sake of the white dresses which were given to them at their baptism; and when one of these had once got a dress which was coarser than usual, he declared that such a sack was fitter for a

swineherd than for a warrior, and that he would have nothing to do with it or with the Christian religion. The Saxons gave Charles a great deal of trouble, for his war with them lasted no less than thirty-three years; and at one time he was so much provoked by their frequent revolts that he put 4,500 Saxon prisoners to death.

But there are better things to be told of Charles. He took very great pains to restore learning, which had long been in a state of decay. He invited learned men from Italy and from England to settle in his kingdom; and of all these, the most famous was a Northumbrian named Alcuin. Alcuin gave him wise and good advice as to the best way of treating the Saxons in order to bring them to the faith; and when Charles was on his way to Rome, just before he was crowned as emperor, Alcuin presented him with a large Latin Bible, written expressly for his use; for we must remember that printing was not invented until more than six hundred years later, so that all books in Charles' days were *manuscript* (or written by hand). Some people have believed that an ancient manuscript Bible which is now to be seen in the great library at Paris is the very one which Alcuin gave to Charles.

We are told that when Charles found himself at a loss for help in educating his people, he said to Alcuin that he wished he might have twelve such learned clerks as Jerome and Augustine; and that Alcuin answered: "The Maker of heaven and earth has had only two such; and are you so unreasonable as to wish for twelve?"

Alcuin was made master of the palace school, which moved about wherever the court was, and in which the pupil's were Charles' own children and the sons of his chief nobles; and besides this, care was taken for the education of the clergy and of the people in general. Charles himself tried very hard to learn

reading and writing when he was already in middle-age, but although he became able to read, and used to keep little tablets under his pillow, in order that he might practise writing while lying awake in bed, he never was able to write easily. Many curious stories are told of the way in which he superintended the service in his chapel, where he desired that everything should be done as well as possible. He would point with his finger or with his staff at any person whom he wished to read in chapel, and when he wished anyone to stop he coughed, and it was expected that at these signals each person would begin or stop at once, although it might be in the middle of a sentence.

During this time the question of images came up among the Greeks. The use of images, or, rather, pictures, in churches had long been growing, and had been accompanied by various superstitions. The Emperor Leo III., who was not a Greek but a native of Isauria, a mountainous district in Asia Minor, and who reigned from 717 to 741, determined to put an end to the use of pictures in churches. He was supported by the army, which was largely composed of Armenians and other Asiatic races, but he was violently opposed by the Greeks, especially by the monks. The leader of the party defending the pictures was St. John of Damascus, who could speak and write freely because he was not a subject of the emperor, but of the Arab khalif. He taught that sacred pictures were the books of the unlearned, and were necessary to show that our Lord's human nature was real (which the Monophysites were inclined to deny), that the second Commandment was abrogated, or at any rate had changed its meaning, in consequence of the Incarnation, and that pictures, like sacraments, were channels of grace to those who used them rightly. The policy of Leo III. was continued by his son, Constantine V., and his grandson,

Leo IV. These are called the Iconoclastic, or Image-breaking, Emperors. It is certain that if their policy had prevailed everywhere, while it might have prevented the growth of some superstition, it would have seriously hindered Christian art: the masterpieces of Giotto and Fra Angelico, Raphael and Leonardo, could never have existed if the Church had been Iconoclastic. On the death of Leo IV. his widow, Irene, became regent for her infant son. She was a supporter of the sacred pictures, and under her a council was held in 787 at Nicæa, where the First General Council had met in the time of Constantine, more than four centuries and a half before (see I., 52). In this second Nicene Council images were approved. It is reckoned as the Seventh General Council, and is the last which both Greeks and Latins accept. In the west, the popes were also in favour of the images; but they were condemned in a council at Frankfort, and a book was written against them in the name of Charles. It is supposed that this book was mostly the work of Alcuin, but that Charles, besides allowing it to go forth with his name and authority, had really himself had a share in making it. Charles and the Council of Frankfort, however, did not, like the Iconoclastic Emperors, forbid the use of sacred pictures, but only their misuse. It seems that they were not fully informed about what had happened at Nicæa. At any rate, pictures, and even statues (which have never been allowed among the Greeks) came to be used and venerated quite as much in the west as in the east, although the Second Council of Nicæa was not formally accepted by the Latins until the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century.

Charles the Great died in the year 814. A short time before his death he sent for his son Louis, and in the great church at Aix-la-Chapelle, which was Charles's favourite place of abode, he took from the

altar a golden crown, and with his own hands placed it on the head of Louis. By this he meant to show that he did not believe the empire to depend on the pope's will, but considered it to be given to himself and his successors by God alone.

CHAPTER V

DECAY OF CHARLES THE GREAT'S EMPIRE
(A.D. 814–887)

Louis, the son of Charles the Great, was a prince who had very much good in him, so that he is commonly called the Pious. But he was of weak character, and his reign was full of troubles, mostly caused by the ambition of his sons, who were helped by a strong party among the clergy, and even by Pope Gregory the Fourth. At one time he was obliged to undergo public penance, and some years later he was deprived of his kingdom and empire, although these acts caused such a shock to men's feelings that he found friends who helped him to recover his power. After his death (A.D. 840) his children and grandchildren continued to quarrel among themselves as long as any of them lived.

Besides these quarrels among their princes, the Franks were troubled at this time by enemies of many kinds.

First of all came the Northmen, who poured down by sea on the coasts of the more civilized nations. These were the same who in English history are called Danes, with whom the great Alfred had a long struggle, and who afterwards, under Canute, held possession of England for a time. They had light vessels—*serpents*, as they were called—which could sail up rivers, and so they carried fire and sword up

every river whose opening invited them, making their way to places so far from the sea as Mainz on the Rhine, Treves on the Moselle, Paris on the Seine, and even Auxerre on the Yonne. They often sacked the wealthy trading cities which lay open to their attacks; they sailed on to Spain, plundered Lisbon, passed the Straits of Gibraltar, and laid waste the coasts of Italy.

After a time they grew bolder, and would leave their vessels on the rivers while they struck across the country to plunder places which were known to be wealthy. They made fortified camps, often on the islands of the great rivers, and did all the mischief they could within a large circle around them. These Northmen were bitter enemies of Christianity; for some of the Saxons who had lost their homes because they or their fathers would not be converted at Charlemagne's bidding had taken refuge in Scandinavia. They had a special pleasure in turning their fury against churches and monasteries. Whenever they came, the monks, if they did not flee, were massacred, leaving their wealth as a prey to the strangers. People were afraid to till the land, lest these enemies should destroy the fruits of their labours. Famines became common, wolves were allowed to multiply and to prey without check, and such were the distress and fear caused by the invaders that a prayer for the deliverance "from the fury of the Northmen" was added to the service-books of the Frankish Church.

Another set of enemies were the Moslem Arabs, who captured Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica, and laid waste the coasts of the Mediterranean. It is said that some of them sailed up the Tiber and carried off the altar which covered the body of St. Peter. One party of Arabs settled on the banks of a river about halfway between Rome and Naples, others in the neighbourhood of Nice, and on that part of the Alps which is now called the Great St. Bernard; and they robbed

pilgrims and merchants, whom they made to pay heavily for being let off with their lives.

Europe also suffered much from the Magyars or Hungarians, a very rude, heathen people, who about the year 900 poured into it from Asia. We are told that they hardly looked human, that they lived like beasts, that they ate men's flesh and drank their blood, which shows how much they were feared. The word "ogre" is probably a corruption of "Hungarian." The Tartar Magyars, like Attila and his Huns 450 years earlier, were regarded by their victims as semi-human monsters. They rode on small, active horses, so that the heavy-armed cavalry of the Franks could not overtake them, and if they ran away before their enemies they used to stop from time to time and let fly their arrows backwards. From the Elbe to the very south of Italy these barbarians filled Europe with bloodshed and with terror.

The Northmen at length made themselves so much feared in France that King Charles III., who was called the Simple, gave up to them, in 911, a part of his kingdom, which from them got the name of Normandy. There they settled down to a very different sort of life from their old habits of piracy and plunder, so that before long the Normans were ahead of all the other inhabitants of France; and it was from Normandy that William the Conqueror and his warriors came to gain possession of England.

The princes of Charles the Great's family, by their quarrels, broke his empire to pieces, and nobody had anything like the power of an emperor until Otto I., who became king of Germany in 936, and was crowned emperor at Rome in 962.

CHAPTER VI

STATE OF THE PAPACY

(A.D. 891–1046)

All this time the papacy was in a very grievous condition. Popes were set up and put down continually, and some of them were put to death by their enemies. The body of one pope named Formosus, after it had been some years in the grave, was taken up by order of one of his successors (Stephen VI.), was dressed out in the full robes of office, and placed in the papal chair, and then the dead pope was tried and condemned for simony (see next page). It was declared that those whom he had ordained were not to be reckoned among the clergy. His corpse was stripped of the papal robes, the fingers which he had been accustomed to raise in blessing were cut off, and the body, after having been dragged about the city, was thrown into the Tiber (A.D. 896).

Otto the Great, who has been mentioned as emperor, deposed a young pope, John XII., who was charged with all sorts of grave offences (A.D. 963); and that emperor's grandson, Otto III., appointed two popes, one after another (A.D. 996, 999). The second of these popes was a very learned and clever Frenchman, named Gerbert, who as pope took the name of Sylvester II. He had studied under the Arabs in Spain (for in civilization and learning the Arabs were then far beyond the Christians), and it was he who first taught Christians to use the Arabic figures (such as 1, 2, and 3) instead of the Roman letters or figures (such as I., II., and III.). He also made a famous clock; and on account of his skill in such things people supposed him to be a sorcerer, and told strange stories about him. Thus it is said that he made a brazen head, which answered "Yes" and

"No" to questions. Gerbert asked his head where he should die, and supposed from the answer that it was to be in the city of Jerusalem. But one day as he was at service in one of the Roman churches which is called "Holy Cross in Jerusalem," he was taken very ill; and then he understood that that church was the Jerusalem in which he was to die. We need not believe such stories, but yet it is well to know about them, because they show what people were disposed to believe at the time when the stories were made.

The troubles of the papacy continued, and at one time there were no fewer than three popes, each of whom had one of the three chief churches of Rome, and claimed to be the only true pope. But this state of things was such a scandal that the emperor, Henry III., was invited from Germany to put an end to it, and for this purpose he held a council at Sutri, not far from Rome, in 1046. Two of the popes were set aside, and the third, Gregory VI., who was the best of the three, was drawn to confess that he had given money to get his office, because he wished to use the power of the papacy to bring about some kind of reform. But on this he was told that he had been guilty of simony—a sin which takes its name from Simon the sorcerer, in the Acts of the Apostles (ch. viii.), and which means the buying of spiritual things with money. This had never struck Gregory before, but when told of it by the council he had no choice but to lay aside his papal robes, and the emperor made one of his own German bishops pope.

CHAPTER VII

MISSIONS OF THE NINTH AND TENTH CENTURIES

It will be pleasanter to write something about the missions of those times, for a great deal of missionary work was then carried on.

1. The Bulgarians, who had come from Asia in the end of the seventh century, and had settled in the country which still takes its name from them, were converted by missionaries from Constantinople. It is said that, when the work had been begun and the king himself had been baptized by the patriarch of Constantinople (A.D. 861), the king asked the Eastern emperor to send him a painter to adorn the walls of his palace, and that a monk named Methodius was sent accordingly. The king desired him to paint a hall in the palace with subjects of a terrible kind, by which he meant that the pictures should be taken from the perils of hunting. But, instead of such subjects, Methodius painted the last judgment, as being the most terrible of all things, and the king, on seeing the picture of hell with its torments, and being told that such would be the future place of the heathen, was so terrified that he gave up the idols which he had kept until then, and that many of his subjects were also moved to seek admission into the Church.

Although the conversion of Bulgaria had been the work of Greek missionaries, the popes afterwards sent some of their clergy into the country, and claimed it as belonging to them, and this was one of the chief causes why the Greek and the Latin Churches separated from each other, so that they have never since been really reconciled.

2. It is not certain whether the painter Methodius

was the same with a monk of that name, who, with his brother, named Cyril, brought about the conversion of Moravia (A.D. 863). These missionaries went about their work in a different way from what was common, for it had been usual for the Greek clergy to use the Greek language and for the Western clergy to use the Latin in their church service and in other things relating to religion; but instead of this, Cyril and Methodius learnt the language of the country, and translated the church services, with parts of the Holy Scriptures, into it, so that all might be understood by the natives. In Moravia, too, there was a quarrel between the Greek and the Latin clergy, but although the popes usually insisted that the services of the Church should be either in Latin or in Greek (because these were two of the languages which were written over the Saviour's cross), they were so much pleased with the success of Cyril and Methodius that they allowed the service of the Moravian Church to be still in the language of the country.

3. Soon after the conversion of the Moravians, the duke of Bohemia paid a visit to their king, Swatopluk, who received him with great honour, but at dinner set him and his followers to sit on the floor, as being heathens. Methodius, who was at the king's table, spoke to the duke, and said that he was sorry to see so great a prince obliged to feed as if he were a swineherd. "What should I gain by becoming a Christian?" he replied; and when Methodius told him that the change would raise him above all kings and princes, he and his thirty followers were baptized.

A story of the same kind is told as to the conversion of the Carinthians, a Slavonic tribe, which was brought about in the end of the eighth century by a missionary named Ingo, who asked Christian slaves to eat at his own table, while he caused food to be set outside the door for their heathen masters, as if they

had been dogs. This led the Carinthian nobles to ask questions, and in consequence of what they heard they were baptized, and their example was followed by their people generally.

The second bishop of Prague, the chief city of Bohemia,[1] Adalbert, is famous as having gone on a mission to the heathens of Prussia, by whom he was martyred on the shore of the Frische Haff in 997.

4. In the north of Germany, in Denmark, and in Sweden, St. Anskar, who was born near Amiens, and who became a monk at New Corbey, on the Weser, laboured for thirty-nine years with earnest devotion and with great success (A.D. 826-865). In addition to preaching the Gospel of salvation, he did much in such charitable works as the building of hospitals and the redemption of captives; and he persuaded the chief men of the country north of the Elbe to give up their trade in slaves, which had been a source of great profit to them, but which Anskar taught them to regard as contrary to the Christian religion. Anskar was made archbishop of Hamburg and Bremen, and is styled "The Apostle of the North." But he had to suffer many dangers and reverses in his missionary work. At one time, when Hamburg was burnt by the Northmen, he lost his church, his monastery, his library, and other property; but he only said, with the Patriarch Job: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!" Then he set to work again, without being discouraged by what had befallen him, and he even made a friend of the heathen king who had led the attack on Hamburg. Twice he spent some time in Sweden, and he was the founder of the first Christian mission in that country. Anskar died in the year 865. His festival is kept on February 3. It is told that when some of his friends were talking of miracles which he was supposed to have done, he said: "If I were worthy in my Lord's

[1] Now called Czechoslovakia.

sight, I would ask of Him to grant me one miracle—that He would make me a good man!"

5. The Russians were converted in the following way: Olga, the wife of their prince (whose ancestor, Rurik, had originally been a Viking from Norway), visited Constantinople, and, according to one account, was baptized there. She had a mission sent from Germany to convert the Russians, but it failed. Twenty years later, her grandson Vladimir, dissatisfied with the gods of his fathers, sent messengers to other countries to report on their different religions. The Moslems, he was told, were forbidden pork and wine; the Jews had lost their country; the services of the Germans were devoid of beauty; but the messengers sent to Constantinople were so enchanted by the Liturgy which they heard in St. Sophia that they thought they were in heaven. Vladimir, remembering the wisdom of his grandmother and her conversion to Christianity, decided to adopt her religion for himself and his people, and sent to Constantinople for missionaries. This was the beginning of the Russian Church. When Vladimir (who, at his baptism, took the name of Basil) had been converted (A.D. 988) he ordered that the idol of the chief god who had been worshipped by the Russians should be dragged at a horse's tail through the streets of the capital, Kieff, and should be thrown into the River Dnieper. Many of the people burst into tears at the sight; but when they were told that the prince wished them to be baptized, they said that a change of religion must be good if their prince recommended it; and they were baptized in great numbers. "Some," we are told, "stood in the water up to their necks, others up to their breasts, holding their young children in their arms; and the priests read the prayers from the bank of the river, naming at once whole companies by the same name."

6. I might give an account of the spreading of the

Gospel in Poland, Hungary, and other countries; but let us keep ourselves to the north of Europe. Although Anskar had given up his whole life to missionary work among the nations near the Baltic Sea, there was still much to be done, and sometimes the Christian religion was preached in ways which to us seem very strange. As an instance of this, we may give some account of a Norwegian king named Olaf, the son of Tryggve.

Olaf was at first a heathen, and had long been a famous sea-rover, when he was converted and baptized in one of the Scilly Islands (A.D. 994). He took up his new religion with a great desire to spread it among his people, and he went about from one part of Norway to another, everywhere destroying temples and idols, and requiring the people to be baptized whether they were willing or not. At one place he found eighty heathens, who were supposed to be wizards. He first tried to convert them in the morning when they were sober, and again in the evening when they were enjoying themselves over their horns of ale; and as he could not persuade them, whether they were sober or drunk, he burnt their temple over their heads. All the eighty perished except one, who made his escape; and this man afterwards fell into the king's hands, and was thrown into the sea.

At another time, Olaf fell in with a young man named Endrid, who agreed to become a Christian if any one whom the king might appoint should beat him in diving, in archery, and in sword-play. Olaf himself undertook the match, and got the better of Endrid in all the trials; and then Endrid gave in, and allowed himself to be converted and baptized. These were strange ways of spreading the Gospel; but they seem to have had their effect on the rough men of the North.

At last, Olaf was attacked by some of his heathen neighbours, and was beaten in a great sea-fight (A.D.

1000). It was generally believed that he had perished in the sea; but there is a story of a Norwegian pilgrim who, nearly fifty years later, lost his way among the sands of Egypt, and lighted on a lonely monastery, with an old man of his own country as its abbot. The abbot put many questions to him, and asked him to carry home a girdle and a sword, and to give them with a message to a warrior who had fought bravely beside King Olaf in his last battle; and on receiving them the old warrior was assured that the Egyptian abbot could be no other than his royal master, who had been so long supposed to be dead.

Somewhat later than Olaf the son of Tryggve (A.D. 1015) Norway had another King Olaf who was very zealous for the spreading of the Gospel among his people, and, like the elder Olaf, was willing to do so by force if he could not manage the matter otherwise. On his visiting a place called Dalen, a bishop named Grimkil, who accompanied him, set forth the Christian doctrine; but the heathen answered that their own god was better than the God of the Christians, because he could be seen. The king spent the greater part of the night in prayer, and next morning at daybreak the idol of the northern god Thor was brought forward by his worshippers. Olaf pointed to the rising sun, as being a witness to the glory of its Maker; and, while the heathens were gazing on its brightness, a tall soldier, to whom the king had given his orders beforehand, lifted up his club and dashed the idol to pieces. A swarm of loathsome creatures, which had lived within the idol's huge body, and had fattened on the food and drink which were offered to it, rushed forth, as in the case of the image of Serapis, hundreds of years before (see I., 88); whereupon the men of Dalen were convinced of the falsehood of their old religion, and consented to be baptized. King Olaf was at length killed in battle against his heathen subjects (A.D. 1030), he was canonized and became the Patron Saint of

Norway: there are churches dedicated to him in London, York, Chichester, and elsewhere.

7. From Norway the Gospel made its way to the Norwegian settlements in Iceland, and even to Greenland, where it long flourished, until, in the middle of the fifteenth century, ice gathered on the shores so as to make it impossible to land on them. About the same time a great plague, which was called the Black Death, carried off a large part of the settlers. The fate of the others is unknown: but the remains of their settlement have been found.

It is certain that some of the Norwegians from Greenland discovered a part of the American continent, although no traces of them remained there when the country was again discovered by Europeans, hundreds of years later. They called the country Vinland, because they found grapes growing there.

CHAPTER VIII

POPE GREGORY THE SEVENTH—THE GREAT SCHISM

PART I

IN the period with which we are now dealing, the power of the popes had grown far beyond what it was in the days of Gregory the Great.

You have read that Gregory was very much displeased because a patriarch of Constantinople had styled himself *Universal Bishop* (see I., 174). But since that time the popes had taken to calling themselves by this very title, and they meant a great deal more by it than the patriarchs of Constantinople had meant; for the Greeks were fond of big words, so that, when a patriarch called himself *Universal Bishop*, he did not mean anything in particular, but merely to give himself a title which would sound

grandly. And thus, although he claimed to be universal, he would have allowed the bishops of Rome to be universal too. But when the popes called themselves *Universal Bishops,* they meant that they were bishops of the whole church, and that all other bishops were under them.

They had friends, too, who were ready to say anything to raise their power and greatness. Thus, about the year 800, when the popes had begun to get some land of their own, through the gifts of Pepin and Charlemagne (see II., 11), a story was invented that the first Christian emperor, Constantine, when he built his city of Constantinople, and went to live in the East, made over Rome to the pope, and gave him also all Italy, with other countries of the West, and the right of wearing a golden crown. And this story of Constantine's gift (or *donation,* as it was called), although it was quite false, was universally believed, until in the fifteenth century it was shown to be false.

About fifty years later another falsehood was put forth, which helped the popes greatly. Somebody, who took the name of Isidore, a famous Spanish bishop who had been dead more than two hundred years, made a collection of Church laws and of popes' letters; and he mixed up with the true letters some which were not genuine, having been written recently and attributed to earlier popes, but which he pretended to have been written by bishops of Rome from the very time of the Apostles. In these letters it was made to appear that the pope had been appointed by our Lord Himself to be head of the whole Church, and to govern it as he liked; and that the popes had always used this power from the beginning. This collection of laws is known by the name of the *False Decretals;* but nobody in those times had any notion that they were false, and so they were believed by everyone, and the pope got all that they claimed for him.

But in course of time the popes would not be con-

tented even with this. In former ages nobody could be made pope without the emperor's consent, and we have seen how Otto the Great, his grandson, Otto III., and afterwards Henry III., had thought that they might call popes to account for their conduct; how these emperors brought some popes before councils for trial, and turned them out of their office when they misbehaved (II., 19, 20). But just after Henry III., as we have read, had got rid of three popes at once, a great change began, which was meant to set the popes above the emperors. The chief mover in this change was Hildebrand, who is said to have been the son of a carpenter in a little Tuscan town, and was born between the years 1010 and 1020.

Part II

Hildebrand became a monk of the strictest kind, and soon showed a wonderful power of swaying the minds of other men. A German named Bruno, bishop of Toul, had been chosen as pope by Henry III., to whom he was related; as he was on his way to Rome that he might take possession of his office, his thoughts were entirely changed by some talk with Hildebrand, whom he happened to meet. Hildebrand told him that popes, instead of being appointed by emperors, ought to be freely chosen by the Roman clergy and people; and thereupon Bruno, putting off his fine robes, went on to Rome in company with Hildebrand, whose lessons he listened to all the way, so that he took up the monk's notions as to all matters which concerned the Church. On arriving at Rome, he told the Romans that he did not consider himself to be pope on account of the emperor's favour, but that if they should think fit to choose him he was willing to be pope. On this he was elected by them with great joy, and took the name of Leo IX. (A.D. 1048). But, although Leo was called pope, it was Hildebrand who really took the management of everything.

When Leo died (A.D. 1054), the Romans wished to put Hildebrand into his place; but he did not yet feel himself ready to take the papacy, and instead of this he contrived to get one after another of his party elected, until at length, after having really directed everything for no less than five-and-twenty years, under five popes in succession, he allowed himself to be chosen in 1073, and styled himself Gregory VII.

The emperor Henry III. had died in 1056, leaving a boy less than six years old to succeed him; and this boy, who became Henry IV., was very badly treated by those who were about him. One day, as he was on an island in the Rhine, Hanno, archbishop of Cologne, gave him such an account of a beautiful new boat which had been built for the archbishop, that the young prince naturally wished to see it; and as soon as he was safe on board, Hanno carried him off to Cologne, away from his mother, the Empress Agnes. Thus, young Henry was in the hands of people who sought to make use of him for their own advantage; and, although he was naturally a bright, clever, amiable lad, they did what they could to spoil him, and to make him unfit for his office, by educating him badly, and by throwing in his way temptations to which he was only too ready to yield. And when they had done this, and he had made himself hated by many of his people on account of his misbehaviour, the very persons who had done the most to cause his faults took advantage of them, and tried to get rid of him as king of Germany and emperor. In the meantime Hildebrand (or Gregory, as we must now call him) and his friends had been well pleased to look on the troubles of Germany; for they hoped to turn the discontent of the Germans to their own purpose.

Gregory had higher notions as to the papacy than anyone who had gone before him. He held that all power of every kind belonged to the pope; that kings had their authority from him; that all kingdoms were

held under him as the chief lord; that popes were as much greater than kings or emperors as the sun is greater than the moon; that popes could make or unmake kings just as they pleased; and although he had asked the emperor to confirm his election, as had been usual, he was resolved that such a thing should never again be asked of an emperor by any pope in the time to come.

Part III

One way in which Gregory tried to increase his power was by forcing the clergy to live unmarried, or, if they were married already, to put away their wives. This was a thing which had not been required either in the New Testament or by the Church in early times. But by degrees a notion had grown up that single life was holier than married life; and many canons (or laws of the Church) had been made against the marriage of the clergy. But Gregory carried this further than anyone before him, because he saw that to make the clergy different from other men, and to cut them off from wife and children and the usual connexions of family, was a way to unite them more closely into a body by themselves. He saw that it would bind them more firmly to Rome; that it would teach them to look to the pope, rather than to their national sovereign, as their chief; and that he might count on such men as sure tools, ready to be at the pope's service in any quarrel with princes. He, therefore, sent out his orders, forbidding the marriage of the clergy, and he set the people against their spiritual pastors by telling them to have nothing to do with the married clergy, and not to receive the sacraments of the Church from them. The effect of these commands was terrible; the married clergy were insulted in all possible ways, many of them were driven by violence from their parishes, and their unfortunate wives were made objects of scorn for all mankind. So great and

scandalous were the disorders which arose, that many persons, in disgust at the evils which distracted the Church, and at the fury with which parties fought within it, forsook it and joined some of the sects which were always on the outlook for converts from it.

Another thing on which Gregory set his heart, as a means of increasing the power of the popes, was to do away with what was called *Investiture*. This was the name of the form by which princes gave bishops possession of the estates and other property belonging to their sees. The custom had been that princes should put the pastoral staff into the hands of a new bishop, and should place a ring on one of his fingers; but now fault was found with these acts, because the staff meant that the bishop had the charge of his people as a shepherd has of his flock, and the ring meant that he was joined to his Church as a husband is joined to his wife in marriage. For now it was seen to be wrong to use things which are signs of spiritual power, when that which the prince gives is not spiritual power, but only a right to the earthly possessions of the see. Gregory, therefore, ordered that no bishop should take investiture from any sovereign, and that no sovereign should give investiture; and out of this grew a quarrel which lasted fifty years, and was the cause of grievous troubles in the Church, for most bishops were important vassals, with large bodies of armed men under them, and the princes naturally did not want to lose their control over them.

Gregory had also quarrels with enemies at home. One of these, a rough and lawless man named Cencius, went so far as to seize him when he was at a service about midnight on Christmas-eve, and carried him off to a tower, where the pope was exposed all night to the insults of a gang of ruffians, and of Cencius himself, who even held a sword to his naked throat, in the hope of frightening him into the

payment of a large sum as ransom. But Gregory was not a man to be terrified by any violence, and held out firmly. A woman who took pity on him bathed his wounds, and a man gave him some furs to protect him against the cold; and in the morning he was delivered by a party of his friends, by whom Cencius and his ruffians were overpowered, and frightened into giving up their prisoner.

Part IV

In Germany many of the princes and people threw off their obedience to Henry. They destroyed his castles and reduced him to great distress; they held meetings against him, and were strong enough to make him give up his power of government for a time, and leave all questions between him and his subjects to be settled by the pope. Henry was so much afraid of losing his kingdom altogether, that, in order to beg the pope's mercy, he crossed the Alps, with his queen and a few others, in the midst of a very hard winter, running great risks among the snow and ice which covered the lofty mountains over which his road lay. In the hope of getting the pope's forgiveness, he hastened to Canossa, a castle among the Apennines, at which Gregory then was; but Gregory kept the emperor standing three days outside the gate, dressed as a penitent, and pierced through and through by the bitter cold of that terrible winter, before he would allow himself to be seen. When at last Henry was admitted, the pope treated him very harshly; some say that he even tried to make him take the Holy Sacrament of our Lord's body, by way of proving whether he were innocent or guilty of the charges which his enemies brought against him. And, after all that Henry had gone through, no peace was made between him and his enemies. The troubles of Germany continued; the other party set up against

Henry a king of their own choosing, named Rudolf; and Henry, in return for this, set up another pope in opposition to Gregory.

After a time, Henry was able to put down his enemies in Germany, and he led a large army into Italy, where he got almost all Rome into his hands; and on Easter Day, 1084, he was crowned as emperor, in St. Peter's Church, by Clement III., the pope of his party. Gregory entreated the help of Robert Guiscard, the chief of some Normans who had got possession of the south of Italy; and Guiscard, who was glad to have such an opportunity for interfering, speedily came to his relief and delivered him. But in fighting with the Romans in the streets, these Normans set the city on fire, and a great part of it was destroyed. Gregory felt himself unable to bear the sight of his ruined city, and, when the Normans withdrew, he went with them to Salerno, where he died on May 25, 1085. It is said that his last words were: "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore I die in exile"; and his chaplain answered: "In exile, my lord, thou canst not die, for God hath given thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession."

Of all the popes, Gregory VII. was the one who did most to increase the power of the papacy. No doubt he was honest in his intentions, and thought that to carry them out would be the best thing for the whole Church, as well for the bishops of Rome. But he did not care whether the means which he used were fair or foul; and if his plans had succeeded, they would have brought all mankind into slavery to Rome.

Part V

It was during the reign of Leo IX., the first of the popes who were under Hildebrand's influence,

that the final breach took place between the churches of Rome and Constantinople. For five or six centuries the Latin and the Greek halves of the Church had been drifting apart. They had been out of communion with one another several times before; they had long ceased to act together, or to look upon one another as brethren. Each had come to live in a world of its own; the Greeks despised the Latins as "barbarians," the Latins hated the Greeks as "schismatics." Each had its own Roman emperor, whom it regarded as the only true successor of Augustus and Constantine; and its own spiritual head, the pope for the Latins, the œcumenical patriarch for the Greeks.

Michael Cerularius, the patriarch of Constantinople, denounced certain Latin practices of small importance, such as the use of unleavened bread in the Holy Eucharist, and closed the Latin monasteries in Constantinople. An unedifying quarrel followed, carried on eagerly by both sides. At last the legates of Pope Leo IX., headed by Cardinal Humbert, laid on the altar of St. Sophia, in Constantinople, a bull excommunicating Michael. This took place on July 16, 1054. Michael replied a few days later by excommunicating Leo. The breach thus made has never been really healed.

The real causes of the schism were the gradual estrangement of the Greeks from the Latins, and the increasing claims of the papacy, which the Greeks could not accept. Michael Cerularius determined to free his church, once for all, from the Roman claim to supremacy. He succeeded, but at the cost of permanent schism. Henceforth the Church is divided into two rival communions, Greek and Latin, Eastern and Western, "Orthodox" and "Catholic." The other Eastern patriarchates, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem, reduced to small importance by the Moslem conquest, followed Constantinople; so did the churches founded by Greek missionaries in Bul-

garia, Russia, and other countries. All the churches of Western Europe followed Rome.

The result was, that when the next wave of Moslem conquest attacked Christendom, the Greek churches, unsupported by the Latins, went down before it; and that the papacy, now left untrammelled by the rival claims of Constantinople, exalted itself to such a point that it became intolerable.

CHAPTER IX

THE FIRST CRUSADE

(A.D. 1095–1099)

Part I

The popes who came next after Gregory VII. carried things with a high hand, following the example which he had set them. They got the better of Henry IV., but in a way which did them no credit. For when Henry had returned from Italy to his own country, and had done his best, by many years of good government, to heal the effects of the long troubles of Germany, the popes encouraged his son Conrad, and after Conrad's death, his younger son Henry, to rebel against him. The younger Henry behaved very treacherously to his father, whom he forced to give up his crown; and, at last, Henry IV. died broken-hearted in 1106. When Henry was thus out of the way, his son, Henry V., who, until then, had seemed to be a tool of the pope and the clergy, showed what sort of man he really was by imprisoning Pope Paschal II. and his cardinals for nine weeks, until he made the pope grant all that he wanted. But at length this emperor was able to settle for a time the great quarrel of investitures, by an agreement made at the city of Worms, on the Rhine, in 1123.

It was agreed that the bishops should no longer receive the ring and staff, the symbols of spiritual power, from the emperor, but should be granted possession of their temporal goods by the touch of his sceptre, and should do homage to him for their lands.

But before this time, and while Henry IV. was still emperor, the popes had gained a great addition to their power and importance by the *Crusades*—a word which means wars undertaken for the sake of the Cross. You have read already, how, from the fourth century, it became the fashion for Christians to flock from all countries into the Holy Land, that they might warm their faith by the sight of the places where our blessed Lord had been born, and lived, and died, and risen from the dead, and where most of the other things written in the Scripture history had taken place (I., 102). Very often, indeed, this pilgrimage was found to do more harm than good to those who went on it; for many of them had their minds taken up with anything rather than the pious thoughts which they professed; but the fashion of pilgrimage grew more and more, whether the pilgrims were the better or the worse for it.

In the eleventh century, the Seljuk Turks, a tribe of Tartars from Central Asia, obtained control of the decadent Arab khalifs of Bagdad. They conquered Asia Minor, which the Arabs had never been able to occupy permanently. In 1071 the Emperor Romanus IV. was defeated and taken prisoner at Manzikert, in Armenia: soon afterwards the Turks were on the shores of the Bosphorus, threatening Constantinople. Syria, and Palestine, as well as Asia Minor, were now under their rule.

When the Holy Land had fallen into the hands of the Moslems (see II., 3), they often treated the Christian pilgrims very badly, behaving cruelly to them, insulting them, and making them pay

enormously for leave to visit the holy places. And when Palestine was conquered by the Seljuk Turks,[1] who had adopted the Moslem religion lately, and were full of their new zeal for it (A.D. 1076), the condition of the Christians there became worse than ever. There had often been thoughts among the Christians of the West as to making an attempt to recover the Holy Land from the unbelievers; but now the matter was to be taken up with a zeal which had never been felt before.

A pilgrim from the north of France, called Peter the Hermit, on returning from Jerusalem, carried to Pope Urban II. a fearful tale of the tyranny with which the Moslems there treated both the Christian inhabitants and the pilgrims; and the pope gave him leave to try what he could do to stir up the Christians of the West for the deliverance of their brethren. Peter was a small, lean, dark man, but with an eye of fire, and a power of fiery speech; and wherever he went, he found that people of all classes eagerly thronged to hear him; they even gathered up the hairs which fell from the mule on which he rode, and treasured them up as precious relics. On his bringing back to the pope a report of the success which he had thus far met, Urban himself resolved to proclaim the crusade, and went into France, as being the country where it was most likely to be welcomed. There, in a great meeting at Clermont, A.D. 1095, where such vast numbers attended that most of them were forced to lodge in tents, because the town itself could not hold them, the pope, in stirring words, set forth the reasons of the holy war, and invited his hearers to take part in it. While he was speaking, the people broke in on him with shouts of "God wills it!"—words which from that time became the cry of the Crusaders; and when he had done, thousands enlisted for the crusade by fixing little crosses on their dress.

[1] Not to be confused with the Ottoman Turks of a later period.

All over Europe everything was set in motion; almost everyone, whether old or young, strong or feeble, was eager to join; women urged their husbands or their sons to take the cross, and anyone who refused was despised by all. Many of those who enlisted would not wait for the time which had been fixed for starting. A large body set out under Peter the Hermit and two knights, of whom one was called Walter the Pennyless. Other crowds followed, which were made up not of fighting men only, but of poor, broken-down old men, of women and children who did not know how very far off Jerusalem was, or what dangers lay in the way to it. There were many simple country folk, who set out with their families in carts drawn by oxen; and whenever they came to any town, their children asked: "Is this Jerusalem?" And besides these poor creatures, there were many bad people, who plundered as they went on, so as to make the crusade hated even by the Christian inhabitants of the countries through which they passed.

These first swarms took the way through Hungary to Constantinople, and then across the Bosphorus into Asia Minor. Walter the Pennyless, who, although his pockets were empty, seems to have been a brave and good soldier, was killed in battle near Nicæa, the place where the First General Council had been held (see I., 52); and the bones of his followers who fell with him were gathered into a great heap, which stood as a monument of their rashness. It is said that more than a hundred thousand human beings had already perished in these ill-managed attempts before the main forces of the Crusaders began to move.

Part II

When the regular armies started at length, A.D. 1096, part of them marched through Hungary, while others went through Italy, and there took ship for

Constantinople. The chief of their leaders was Godfrey de Bouillon, a brave and pious knight; and among the other commanders was Robert, duke of Normandy, whom we read of in English history as the eldest son of William the Conqueror, and brother of William Rufus. When they reached Constantinople, they found that the Greek emperor, Alexius, looked on them with distrust and dislike rather than with kindness; and he was glad to get rid of them by helping them across the strait to Asia.

In passing through Asia Minor, the Crusaders had to fight often, and to struggle with many other difficulties. The sight of the hill of bones near Nicæa roused them to fury; and, in order to avenge Walter the Pennyless and his companions, they laid siege to the city, which they took at the end of six weeks. After resting there for a time, they went on again and reached Antioch, which they besieged for eight months (October, 1197-June, 1198). During this siege they suffered terribly. Their tents were blown to shreds by the winds, or were rotted by the heavy rains which turned the ground into a swamp; and, as they had wasted their provisions in the beginning of the siege (not expecting that it would last so long), they found themselves in great distress for food, so that they were obliged to eat the flesh of horses and camels, of dogs and mice, with grass and thistles, leather, and the bark of trees. Their horses had almost all perished from the hardships of the siege, and the men were thinned by disease and by the assaults of their enemies.

At length Antioch was betrayed to them; but they made a bad use of their success. They slew all of the inhabitants who refused to become Christians. They wasted the provisions which they found in the city, or which were brought to them from other quarters; and when a fresh Moslem force appeared, which was vastly greater than their own, they found themselves

shut in between it and the garrison of the castle, which they had not been able to take when they took the city.

Their distress was now greater than before, and their case seemed to be almost hopeless, when their spirits were revived by the discovery of something which was supposed to be the lance by which our blessed Lord's side was pierced on the cross. They rushed, with full confidence, to attack the enemy on the outside; and the victory which they gained over these was soon followed by the surrender of the castle. But a plague which broke out among them obliged them to remain nearly nine months longer at Antioch.

Having recruited their health, they moved on towards Jerusalem, although their numbers were now much less than when they had reached Antioch. When at length they came in sight of the Holy City, a cry of "Jerusalem! Jerusalem! God wills it!" ran through the army, although many were so moved that they were unable to speak, and could only find vent for their feelings in tears and sighs. All threw themselves on their knees and kissed the sacred ground (June, 1099). The siege of Jerusalem lasted forty days, during which the Crusaders suffered much from hunger, and still more from thirst, for it was the height of summer, when all the brooks of that hot country are dried up; the wells, about which we read so much in Holy Scripture, were purposely choked with rubbish, and the cisterns were destroyed or poisoned. Water had to be fetched from a distance of six miles, and was sold very dear; but it was so filthy that many died after drinking it. The besiegers found much difficulty in getting wood to make the engines which were then used in attacking the walls of cities, and when they had at length been able to build such machines as they wanted, the defenders tried to upset them, and threw at them showers of burning pitch or oil, and what was called the Greek

fire, in the hope that they might set the engines themselves in flames, or at least might scald or wound the people in them. We are even told that two old women, who were supposed to be witches, were set to utter spells and curses from the walls, but a stone from an engine crushed the poor old wretches, and their bodies tumbled down into the ditch which surrounded the city. The Crusaders were driven back in one assault, and were all but giving way in the second; but Godfrey de Bouillon thought that he saw in the sky a bright figure of a warrior beckoning him onwards, and the Crusaders pressed forward with renewed courage until they found themselves masters of the Holy City (July 15, 1099). It was noted that this was at three o'clock on a Friday afternoon—the same day of the week and the same hour of the day when our blessed Lord was crucified.

We must draw a veil over the butchery and the other terrible things of which the Crusaders were guilty when they gained possession of Jerusalem. They were, indeed, wrought up to such a state that they were not masters of themselves. At one moment they were throwing themselves on their knees with tears of repentance and joy; and then again they would start up and break loose into some frightful acts of cruelty and plunder against the conquered enemy, sparing neither old man, nor woman, nor child.

Part III

Eight days after the taking of Jerusalem, the Crusaders met to choose a king. Robert of Normandy was one of those who were proposed, but the choice fell on Godfrey de Bouillon. But the pious Godfrey said that he would not wear a crown of gold in the city where the King of kings had been crowned with thorns, and he refused to take any higher title than that of Defender and Baron of the Holy Sepulchre.

Godfrey did not live long to enjoy his honours, and his brother, Baldwin, was chosen in his room. The kingdom of Jerusalem was established, and pilgrims soon began to stream afresh towards the sacred places. But this recovery of the Holy Land from the Moslems by the Christians of the West did not lead to the union of the Greek and Latin Churches; it unhappily turned out quite otherwise. The popes set up a Latin patriarch, with Latin bishops and clergy, against the Greeks, and the two Churches were on worse terms than ever.

This crusade was followed by others, as we shall see by-and-by; but meanwhile, although the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem was never strong, and soon showed signs of decay, these crusades brought the nations of the West, which fought side by side in them, to know more of each other; they served to increase trade with the East, and so to bring the produce of the Eastern countries within the reach of Europeans; and, as we have said already (II., 37), they greatly helped to increase the power of the popes, who had seen their way to take the direction of them, and thus get a stronger hold than before on the princes and people of Western Christendom.

CHAPTER X

NEW ORDERS OF MONKS—MILITARY ORDERS

In the times of which we have lately been speaking, the monks did much valuable service to the Church and to the world in general. It was mostly through their labours that heathen nations were converted to the Gospel, that their barbarous roughness was tamed, and that learning, although it had greatly decayed, was not altogether lost. Often, where monks had built their houses in lonely places, little clusters of

huts grew up round them, and in time these clusters of huts became large and important towns. Monks were very highly thought of, and sometimes kings and queens would leave all their worldly grandeur and would withdraw to spend their last years under the quiet roof of a monastery. But it was found, at the same time, that monks were apt to fall away from the strict rules by which they were bound, so that reforms were continually needed among them.

As the popes became more powerful they found the monks valuable friends and allies, and they gave *exemptions* to many monasteries; that is to say, they took it on themselves to set those monasteries free from the control which the bishops had held over them, so that the monks of these exempt places would not allow that anyone but the pope was over them.

You have read of the rule which was drawn up for monks by St. Benedict (I., 164). Some other rules were afterwards made, such as that of St. Columbanus (see I., 152), an Irish abbot, who for many years (A.D. 589-615) laboured in France, Switzerland, and the north of Italy. Columbanus went more into little matters than Benedict had done, and laid down exact directions in cases where Benedict had left the abbots of monasteries to settle things as they should think fit. Thus Columbanus' rule laid down that any monk who should call anything his own should receive six strokes, and appointed the same punishment for everyone who should omit to say *Amen* after the abbot's blessing, or to make the sign of the cross over his spoon or his candle, for everyone who should talk at meals, or should cough at the beginning of a psalm. There were ten strokes for striking the table with a knife, or for spilling beer on it; and for heavier offences the punishment sometimes rose as high as two hundred. Besides that, other punishments were

used, such as fasting on bread and water, psalm-singing, humble postures, and long times of silence.

Still, however, the rule of St. Benedict was that by which the greater part of the Western monks was governed. But, although they were under the same rule, they had no other connexion with each other; each company of monks stood by itself, having no tie outside its own walls. There was not as yet, in the West, anything like the society which St. Pachomius had established long before in Egypt (see I., 69), where all the monasteries were supposed to be as so many sisters, and all owned the mother-monastery as their head. It was not until the tenth century that anything of this kind was set on foot in the Western Church.

1. In the year 912, an abbot named Berno founded a new society at Cluny, in Burgundy. He began with only twelve monks, but by degrees the fame of Cluny spread, and the pattern which had been set there was copied far and wide, until at length more than two thousand monasteries were reckoned as belonging to the "Congregation" (as it was called), or Order of Cluny, and all these looked up to the great abbot of the mother-monastery as their chief. The early abbots of Cluny were very remarkable men, and took a great part in the affairs both of the Church and of kingdoms: some of them even refused the popedom, and bishops placed themselves under them, as simple monks of Cluny, for the sake of their advice and teaching.

The founders of the Cluniac order added many precepts to the rule of St. Benedict. Thus the monks were required to swallow all the crumbs of their bread at the end of every meal, and when some of them showed a wish to escape this duty, they were frightened into obedience by an awful tale that a monk, when dying, saw at the end of his bed a great sack of the crumbs which he had left on the table

rising up as a witness against him. The monks were bound to keep silence at times, and we are told that, rather than break this rule, one of them allowed his horse to be stolen, and another let himself be carried off as a prisoner by the Northmen. During these times of silence they made use of a set of signs, by which they were able to let each other know what they wanted.

This congregation of Cluny, then, was the first great monastic order in the West, and others soon followed it. They were mostly very strict at first—some of them so strict that they not only forbade all luxury in the monks, but would not allow any fine buildings, or any beautiful ornaments in their churches. But in general the monks soon got over this by saying that, as their buildings and their services were not for themselves, but for God, their duty was to honour Him by giving Him of the best that they could.

These orders were known from each other by the difference of their dress; thus the Benedictines were called Black Monks, the Cistercians were called White Monks, and at a later time we find mention of Black Friars, White Friars, Grey Friars, and so forth.

2. About the time of Gregory VII. several new orders were founded, and of these the most famous were the Carthusians and the Cistercians.

As to the beginning of the Carthusian order, a strange story is told. The founder, Bruno, is said to have been studying at Paris, when a famous teacher, who had been greatly respected for his piety, died. As his funeral was on its way to the grave, the corpse suddenly raised itself from the bier and uttered the words: "By God's righteous judgment I am accused!" All who were around were struck with horror, and the burial was put off until the next day. But then, as the mourners were again moving towards the grave, the dead man rose up a second time, and

groaned out: "By God's righteous judgment I am judged!" Again the service was put off; but on the third day, the general awe was raised to a height by his lifting up his head and saying: "By God's righteous judgment I am condemned!" And it is said that on this discovery as to the real state of a man who had been so highly honoured for his supposed goodness, Bruno was so struck by a feeling of the hollowness of all earthly judgment that he resolved to hide himself in a desert.

I have given this story as a sample of the strange tales which have been told and believed. It is, however, true that Bruno did withdraw into a wild and lonely place, which is now known as the Great Chartreuse, among rough and steep rocks, near Grenoble; and there an extremely severe rule was laid down for the monks of his order (A.D. 1084). They were to wear goatskins next to the flesh, and their dress was altogether to be of the coarsest and roughest sort. On three days of each week their food was bread and water; on the other days they were allowed some vegetables; but even their highest fare on holidays was cheese and fish, and they never tasted meat at all. Once a week they submitted to be flogged, after confessing their sins. They spoke on Sundays and festivals only, and were not allowed to use signs like the Cluniacs. It is to be said, to the credit of the Carthusians, that, although their order grew rich and built splendid monasteries and churches, they always kept to their hard way of living, more faithfully, perhaps, than any other order.

3. The Cistercian order was founded by Robert of Molême (A.D. 1098), and took its name from its chief monastery, Citeaux, or, in Latin, *Cistercium*. The rule was very strict. From the middle of September to Easter they were to eat but one meal daily. Their monasteries were not to be built in towns, but in lonely places. They were to shun pomp and pride in all

things. Their services were to be plain and simple, without any fine music. Their vestments and all the furniture of their churches were to be coarse and without ornament. No paintings, nor sculptures, nor stained glass were allowed. The ordinary dress of the monks was to be white.

At first it seemed as if the hardness of the Cistercian rule prevented people from joining. But the third abbot of Citeaux, an Englishman, named Stephen Harding, when he was distressed at the slow progress of the order, was comforted by a vision in which he saw a multitude washing their white robes in a fountain; and very soon the vision seemed to be fulfilled. In 1113 Bernard (of whom we shall hear more presently) entered the monastery of Citeaux, and by-and-by the order spread so wonderfully that it equalled the Cluniac congregation in the number of houses belonging to it. These were not only connected together like the Cluniac monasteries, but had a new kind of bond of union in the general chapters, which were held every year. For these general chapters every abbot of the order was required to appear at Citeaux, to which they all looked up as their mother. Those who were in the nearer countries were bound to attend every year; those who were further off, once in three, or five, or seven years, according to distance. Thus the smaller houses were allowed to have a share in the management of the whole; and the plan was afterwards imitated by the Carthusians and other orders.

4. The crusades gave rise to what are called *military orders,* of which the first and most famous were the Templars and the Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John. These orders were governed by rules which were much like those of the monks, but the members of them were knights, who undertook to defend the Holy Land against the unbelievers. The Hospitallers were at first connected with a hospital which had been founded at Jerusalem for the benefit

of pilgrims by some Italian merchants, and took its name from St. John, a patriarch of Alexandria, who was called the Almsgiver (606-616). They had a black dress, with a white cross on the breast, and, from having been at first employed in nursing the sick and relieving the poor, they became warriors who fought against the Mussulmans.

The Templars, who wore a white dress, with a red cross on the breast, were even more famous as soldiers than the Hospitallers. The knights of both these orders were bound by their rules to remain unmarried, to be regular and frequent in their religious exercises, to live plainly, to devote themselves to the defence of the Christian faith and of the Holy Land; and for the sake of this work emperors, kings, and other wealthy persons bestowed lands and other gifts on them, so that they had large estates in all the countries of Europe. But as they grew rich, they forgot their vows of poverty and humility, and, although they kept up their character for bravery, they were generally disliked for their pride and insolence.

We shall see by-and-by how the order of the Temple came to ruin. But the Hospitallers lasted longer. When the Christians were driven out of the Holy Land, the knights of this order removed first to Cyprus, then to Rhodes, and, last of all, to Malta, where they continued even until the time of Napoleon.

Other military orders were founded after the pattern of the Templars and the Hospitallers. The most famous of them were the Teutonic (or German) knights, who fought the heathen on the shores of the Baltic Sea, and conquered a large tract of country, which afterwards became the kingdom of Prussia; and the order of St. James, which belonged to Spain, and there carried on a continual war with the Moslem Moors, whose settlement in that country has already been mentioned (II., 3).

CHAPTER XI

ST. BERNARD

(A.D. 1091–1153)

PART I

ST. BERNARD was mentioned (II., 48) when we were speaking of the Cistercian order. He was not only famous for his piety and for his eloquent speech, but by means of these he gained such power and influence that he was able to direct the course of things in the Church in such a way as no other man ever did.

Bernard was born near Dijon, in Burgundy, in the year 1091. His father was a knight; his mother, Aletha, was a very religious woman, who watched carefully over his childhood, and prayed earnestly and often that he might be kept from the dangers of an evil world. As Bernard was passing from boyhood to youth, the good Aletha died. We are told that even to her last breath she joined in the prayers and psalm-singing of the clergy who stood round her bed; and he afterwards fancied that she appeared to him in visions, warning him lest he should run off in pursuit of worldly learning so as to forget the importance of religion above all things.

After a time, Bernard was led to resolve on becoming a monk. But before doing so he contrived to bring his father, his uncle, his five brothers, and his sister to the same mind; and when he asked leave to enter the Cistercian order, it was at the head of a party of more than thirty. It is said that, as they were setting out, the eldest brother saw the youngest at play, and told him that all the family property would now fall to him. "Is it heaven for you, and earth for me?" said the boy; "that is not a fair division"; and he followed Bernard with the rest.

We have seen that, although the Cistercian order had been founded some years, people were afraid to join it because the rule was so strict (II., 48). But the example of Bernard and his companions had a great effect, and so many others were thus led to enter the order that the mother-monastery was far too small to hold them. Bernard was chosen to be head of one of the colonies which went forth from Citeaux. The name of his new monastery was Clairvaux, which means *The Bright Valley*. When he and his party first settled there, they had to bear terrible hardships. They suffered from cold and from want of clothing. For a time they had to feed on porridge made of beech-leaves; and even when the worst distress was over, the plainness and poverty of their way of living astonished all who saw it.

Bernard himself went so far in self-denial that he made himself very ill, and would most likely have died, if a bishop, who was his friend, had not stepped in and taken care of him for a time. Bernard afterwards understood that he had been wrong in carrying things so far; but the people who saw how he had worn himself down by fasting and frequent prayer were willing to let themselves be led to anything that so saintly a man might recommend to them. It was even believed that he had the gift of working miracles; and this added much to the admiration which he won wherever he went.

Perhaps there never was a man who had greater influence than Bernard; for, although he did not rise to be anything more than Abbot of Clairvaux, and refused all higher offices, he was able, by the power of his speech, and by the fame of his saintliness, to turn kings and princes, popes and emperors, and even whole assemblies of men, in any way that he pleased. When two popes had been chosen in opposition to each other, Bernard was able to draw all the chief princes of Christendom into siding with that pope

whose cause he had taken up; and when the other pope's successor had been brought so low that he could carry on his claims no longer, he went to Bernard, entreating him to plead for him with the successful pope, Innocent II., and was led by the abbot to throw himself humbly as a penitent at Innocent's feet.

Some years after this, one of Bernard's old pupils was chosen as pope, and took the name of Eugenius III. Eugenius was much under the direction of his old master, and Bernard, like a true friend, wrote a book "On Consideration," which he sent to Eugenius, showing him the chief faults which were in the Roman Church, and earnestly exhorting the pope to reform them.

Part II

Bernard was the chief means of bringing about a new crusade. When tidings came from the East that the Christians in those parts had suffered heavy losses (A.D. 1145), he travelled over a great part of France and along the Rhine in order to enlist people for the holy war. He gathered meetings, at which he spoke in such a way as to move all hearts, and stirred up his hearers to such an eagerness for crusading that they even tore the clothes off his back in order to divide them into little bits, which might serve as Crusaders' badges. He drew in the Emperor Conrad and King Louis VII. of France, besides a number of smaller princes, to join the expedition, although it was so hard to persuade Conrad, that, when at last he was brought over, it was regarded as a miracle.

It had been found, at the time of the first crusade, that many people were disposed to fall on the Jews of their own neighbourhood, as being enemies of Christ no less than the Moslems of the Holy Land, and the same was repeated now. But Bernard strongly set his face against this kind of cruelty, and was not only the

means of saving the lives of many Jews, but brought the chief preacher of the persecution to own with sorrow and shame that he had been utterly wrong.

Although, however, a vast army was raised for the recovery of the Holy Land, and although both the emperor and the French king went at the head of it, nothing came of the crusade except that vast numbers of lives were sacrificed without any gain; and even Bernard's great fame as a saint was not enough to protect him from blame on account of the part which he had taken in promoting this unfortunate attempt.

These were some of the most remarkable things in which Bernard's command over men's minds was shown; and he was able also to get the better of some persons who taught wrong or doubtful opinions, even although they may have been men of sharper wits and of greater learning than himself.

In short, Bernard was the leading man of his age. He was called "The Last of the Fathers": and he wrote several famous hymns, a translation of one of which, "Jesu, the very thought of Thee," is often sung in our churches. Though he was not without his defects, we cannot fail to see in him one of the holiest men of his time, well deserving the title of *saint*, which was granted to him by a pope in 1173, and has ever since been commonly attached to his name. Bernard died in 1153. He is commemorated in the kalendar on August 20.

CHAPTER XII

HADRIAN IV.—ALEXANDER III.—BECKET—THE THIRD CRUSADE

(A.D. 1153–1192)

In the year of Bernard's death Hadrian IV. was chosen pope; and he is especially to be noted here because he was the only Englishman who ever held the

papacy. His name at first was Nicolas Breakspeare; and he was born near St. Albans, where, in his youth, he asked to be received into the famous abbey as a monk. But the monks of St. Albans refused him; and he then went to seek his fortune abroad, where he rose step by step, until at length the poor Hertfordshire lad, who would have had no chance of any great place in his own country (for he was of Saxon family, and the Normans, after the Conquest, kept all the good places for themselves), was chosen to be the head of Christendom (A.D. 1154).

Hadrian had a high notion of the greatness and dignity of his office. When the Emperor Frederick I. (who is called *Barbarossa,* or *Redbeard*) went from Germany into Italy, and was visited in his camp by the pope, Hadrian required that the emperor should hold his stirrup as he mounted his horse, and said that this had been the custom from the time of the great Constantine. Frederick had never heard of such a thing before, and was not willing to submit; but on inquiry he found that a late emperor, Lothair III., had held a pope's stirrup, and then he agreed to do the like. But he took care to do it so awkwardly that everyone who saw it began to laugh; and thus he made his submission appear like a joke.

Frederick Barbarossa carried on a long struggle with the popes. When, at Hadrian's death, two rival popes had been chosen (A.D. 1159), the emperor required them to let him judge between their claims: and, as one of them, Alexander III., refused to admit any earthly judge, Frederick took part with the other, who called himself Victor IV. And when Victor was dead, Frederick set up three more anti-popes, one after another, to oppose Alexander.

But Alexander had the kings of France and England on his side, and at last he not only got himself firmly settled, but brought Frederick to treat for peace with him, and with some cities of North

Italy, which had formed themselves into what was called the Lombard League (A.D. 1177). But we must not believe a story that, when this treaty was concluded in the great church of St. Mark at Venice, the pope put his foot on the emperor's neck, and the choir chanted the words of the 91st Psalm: "Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder"; for this story was not made up until long afterwards, and has no truth at all in it.

It was in Alexander III.'s time that the great quarrel between Henry II. of England and Archbishop Thomas Becket took place. Becket had been raised by the king's favour to be his chancellor, and afterwards to be archbishop of Canterbury and head of all the English clergy (A.D. 1162). But, although until then he had done everything just as the king wished, no sooner had he become archbishop than he turned round on Henry. He claimed that any clergyman who might be guilty of crimes should not be tried by the king's judges, but only in the Church's courts. He was willing to allow that, if a clergyman were found guilty of a great crime in these courts, he might be degraded—that is to say, that he should be turned out of the ranks of the clergy—and that, when he had thus become like other men, he might be tried like any other man for any fresh offences which he might commit. But for the first crime Becket would allow no other punishment than degradation at the utmost. The king said that in such matters clergy and laity ought to be alike; and about this chiefly the two quarrelled, although there were also other matters which helped to stir up the strife.

In order to get out of the king's way, the archbishop secretly left England (A.D. 1164), and for six years he lived in France, where King Louis treated him with much kindness, partly because this seemed a good way to annoy the king of England. But at length peace was made, and Becket had returned to England,

when some new acts of his provoked the king to utter some hasty words against him; whereupon four knights, who thought to do Henry a service, took occasion to try to seize the archbishop, and, as he refused to go with them, murdered him in his own cathedral (A.D. 1170). But as you must have read the story of Becket in the history of England, it need not be repeated here.

In 1185, when Urban III. was pope, tidings reached Europe that Jerusalem had been taken by the great Moslem hero and conqueror, Saladin; and at once all Western Christendom was stirred up to make a grand attempt for the recovery of the Holy City. The lion-hearted Richard of England, Philip Augustus of France, and the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, who had lately made his peace with the pope, were all to take part; but very little came of it. Frederick, after having successfully made his way by Constantinople into Asia Minor, was drowned in the River Cydnus, in Cilicia. Richard, Philip, and other leaders, after reaching the Holy Land, quarrelled among themselves; and the Crusaders, after a vast sacrifice of life, returned home without having effected the deliverance of Jerusalem. You will remember how Richard, in taking his way through Austria, fell into the hands of the Emperor Henry VI., the son of Frederick Barbarossa, and was imprisoned in Germany until his subjects were able to raise the large sum which was demanded for his ransom.

CHAPTER XIII

INNOCENT THE THIRD

(A.D. 1198–1216)

PART I

THE popes were continually increasing their power in many ways, although they were often unable to hold their ground in their own city, but were driven out by the people, so that they were obliged to seek a refuge in France, or to fix their court for a time in some little Italian town. They claimed the right of setting up and plucking down emperors and kings. Instead of asking the emperor to confirm their own election to the papacy, as in former times, they declared that no one could be emperor without their consent. They said that they were the chief lords over kingdoms; they required the emperors to hold their stirrup as they mounted on horseback, and the rein of their bridle as they rode. And while such was their treatment of earthly princes, they also steadily tried to get into their own hands the powers which properly belonged to bishops, so that the bishops should seem to have no rights of their own, but to hold their office and to do whatever they did only through the pope's leave and as his servants. They contrived that, whenever any difference arose in the church of any country, instead of being settled on the spot, it should be carried by an appeal to Rome, that the pope might judge it. They declared themselves to be above any councils of bishops, and claimed the power of assembling general councils, although in earlier times this power had belonged to the emperors, as in the case of the first great council of Nicæa. They interfered with the election of bishops, and with the appointment of the clergy to offices, in every country; and they sent into every country their ambassadors,

or *legates* (as they were called), whom they charged people to respect and obey as they would respect and obey the pope himself. These legates usually made themselves hated by their pride and greediness; for they set themselves up above the archbishops and bishops of any country that they might be sent into, and they squeezed from the clergy of each country which they visited the means of keeping up their pomp and splendour.

The popes who followed Gregory VII. all endeavoured to act in his spirit, and to push the claims of their see further and further. And of these popes, by far the strongest and most successful was Innocent III., who was only thirty-seven years old when he was elected in 1198. You remember how Gregory said that the papacy was as much greater than any earthly power as the sun is than the moon. And now Innocent carried out this further by saying that, as the lesser light (the moon) borrows of the greater light (the sun), so the royal power is borrowed from the priestly power. These claims, which seem to us so extravagant, were accepted because they were, on the whole, used in defence of justice. In those days of cruelty and tyranny, the papacy was the one force in Europe which stood, on the whole, for justice to the oppressed. The pope had no army behind him. His decisions could only be enforced through men's consciences. Until about 1300 the popes used their power, on the whole, for good, and the best men, therefore, gave the papacy their support. They could not foresee what it would become in later centuries, and they never doubted that the pope was the successor of St. Peter, or that his authority had been bestowed by our Lord Himself.

Innocent claimed the right to judge between the princes who claimed the empire and the kingdom of Germany, and of making an emperor by his own choice. He forced the king of France, Philip

Augustus, to do justice to a virtuous Danish princess, whom he had married and had afterwards put away. And he forced John of England to accept Stephen Langton as archbishop of Canterbury, although Langton was appointed by the pope without any regard to the rights of the monks of Canterbury or of the sovereign of England. Both in France and in England Innocent made use of what was called an *interdict* to make people submit to his will. By this sentence (which had first come into use about three hundred years before), a whole country was punished at once, the bad and the good alike; all the churches were closed, all the bells were silenced, all the outward signs of religion were taken away. There was no blessing for marriage, there were no prayers at the burial of the dead; the baptism of children and the office for the dying were the only services of the Church which were allowed while the interdict lasted. And it was commonly found that, although a king might not himself care for any spiritual threats or sentences which the pope might utter, he was unable to hold out against the general feeling of his people, who could not bear to be without the rites of religion, and cried out that the innocent thousands were punished for the sake of one guilty person.

John surrendered completely to the papacy, and agreed to give up his crown to the pope's commissioner, Pandulf; after which he received it again from Pandulf's hands, and promised to hold the kingdoms of England and Ireland on condition of paying a yearly tribute as an acknowledgment that the pope was his lord.

Archbishop Langton, although he had been forced on the English Church by the pope, yet afterwards took a different line from what might have been expected. For when John, by his tyranny, provoked his barons to rise against him, the archbishop was at the head of those who wrung from the king the Great

Charter as a security for English liberty, and, although the pope was violently angry, and threatened to punish the archbishop and the barons severely, Langton stood firmly by the cause which he had taken up.

Part II

While Innocent was thus carrying things with a high hand among the Christians of the West, he could not but feel distress about the state of affairs in the East. There, countries which had once been Christian, and among them the Holy Land, where the Saviour had died and risen again, had fallen into the hands of unbelievers, and all the efforts which had been made to recover them had hitherto been vain. The pope's mind was set on a new crusade, and in order to raise money for it he gave much out of his own purse, stinted himself as to his manner of living, obliged the cardinals and others around him to do the like, and caused collections to be gathered throughout Western Christendom. Eloquent preachers were sent about to stir people up to the great work, and the chief beginning was made at a place called Ecry, in the north of France. It so happened that the most famous of the preachers, whose name was Fulk, arrived there just as a number of nobles and knights were met for a tournament (which was the name given to the fights of knights on horseback, which were regarded as sport, but very often ended in sad earnest). Fulk, by the power of his speech, persuaded most of these gallant knights at Ecry to take the cross, and, as the number of Crusaders grew, some of them were sent to Venice, to provide means for their being carried by sea to Egypt, which was the country in which it was thought that the Moslems might be attacked with the best hope of success.

When these envoys reached Venice, which was then the chief trading city of Europe, they found the

Venetians very willing to supply what they wanted. It was agreed that for a certain sum of money the Venetians should prepare ships and provisions for the number of Crusaders which was expected, and they did so accordingly. But when the Crusaders came, it was found that their numbers fell short of what had been expected, for many had chosen other ways of going to the East, and, as the Venetians would take nothing less than the sum which they had bargained for, the Crusaders, with their lessened numbers, found themselves unable to pay. In this difficulty the Venetians proposed that, instead of the money which could not be raised, the Crusaders should give them their help against the city of Zara, in Dalmatia, with which Venice had a quarrel. The Crusaders were very unwilling to do this, because the pope, in giving his consent to their enterprise, had forbidden them to turn their arms against any Christians. But they contrived to persuade themselves that the pope's words were not to be understood too exactly, and at a meeting in the great church of St. Mark, Henry Dandolo, the doge or duke of Venice, took the cross and declared to the vast multitude of citizens and Crusaders who crowded the church that, although he was ninety-four years of age, and almost or altogether blind, he himself would be the leader.

A fleet of nearly five hundred vessels sailed from Venice accordingly (October, 1202), and Zara was taken after a siege of six days, although the inhabitants tried to soften the feelings of the besiegers by displaying crosses and sacred pictures from the walls as tokens of their brotherhood in Christ. After this success the Crusaders were bound by their engagement to go on to Egypt or the Holy Land, but a young Greek prince, named Alexius, entreated them to restore his father, who had been dethroned by a usurper, to the empire of the East, and although the

French were unwilling to undertake any work that might interfere with the recovery of the Holy Land, the Venetians, who cared little for anything but their own gain, persuaded them to turn aside to Constantinople.

When the Crusaders came in sight of the city, they were so astonished at the beauty of its lofty walls and towers, of its palaces and its many churches, that (as we are told) the hearts of the boldest among them beat with a feeling which could not be kept down, and many of them even burst into tears. They found the harbour protected by a great chain which was drawn across the mouth of it, but this chain was broken by the force of a ship which was driven against it with the sails swollen by a strong wind. The blind old doge, Henry Dandolo, stood in the prow of the foremost ship, and was the first to land in the face of the Greeks, who stood ready to defend the ground. Constantinople was soon won, and the emperor, who had been deposed and blinded by the usurper, was brought from his dungeon and was enthroned in the great church of St. Sophia, while his son Alexius was anointed and crowned as a partner in the empire.

But quarrels soon arose between the Greeks and the Latins. Alexius was murdered by a new usurper; his father died of grief, and the Crusaders found themselves drawn on to conquer the city afresh for themselves. This conquest was disgraced by much cruelty and unchecked plunder, and the religion of the Greeks was outraged by the Latin victors as much as it could have been by heathen barbarians.

The Crusaders set up an emperor and a patriarch of their own, and the Greek clergy were forced to give way to Latins. The pope, although he was much disappointed at finding that his plan for the recovery of the Holy Land had come to nothing, was yet persuaded by the greatness of the conquest to give a kind of approval to it. But the Latin empire of the East

was never strong, and after about sixty years it was overthrown by the Greeks, who drove out the Latins and restored their own form of Christianity.

The Latin conquest of Constantinople was in every way disastrous. The great city, the last refuge of ancient culture, and the bulwark of Christendom against the Moslem, never recovered from the blow. Even when the Greeks regained the city, the Eastern empire was ruined. Moreover, the last hope of reunion between the Greeks and the Latins was destroyed. The Greeks could never forgive the "Latin dogs," who had committed sacrilege in St. Sophia. They were ready to be the slaves of the Turks rather than submit to the pope.

Innocent did not give up the notion of a crusade, and at a later time he sent about preachers to stir up the people of the West afresh, but nothing had come of this when the pope died. But a strange thing arose out of this attempt at a crusade.

A shepherd boy, named Stephen, who lived near Vendome, in the province of Orleans, gave out that he had seen a vision of the Saviour, and had been charged by Him to preach the cross. By this tale Stephen gathered some children about him, and they set off for the crusade, displaying crosses and banners and chanting in every town or village through which they passed: "O Lord, help us to recover Thy true and holy cross!" When they reached Paris there were no less than 15,000 of them, and as they went along their numbers became greater and greater. If any parents tried to keep back their children from joining them it was of no use; even if they shut them up, it was believed that the children were able to break through bars and locks in order to follow Stephen and his companions. Ignorant people fancied that Stephen could work miracles, and treasured up threads of his dress as precious relics. At length the company, whose numbers had reached

30,000, arrived at Marseilles, where Stephen entered the city in a triumphal car, surrounded on all sides by guards. Some shipowners undertook to convey the child-crusaders to Egypt and Africa for nothing; but these were wretches who meant to sell them as slaves to the Mohammedans, and this was the fate of such of the children as reached the African coast, after many of them had been lost by shipwreck on the way.

Innocent, although he had nothing to do with this crusade, or with another of the same kind in Germany, declared that the zeal of the children put to shame the coldness of their elders, whom he was still labouring, with little success, to enlist in the cause of the Holy Land.

Part III

A war of a different kind, but also styled a crusade, was carried on in the south of France while Innocent was pope. In that country there were great numbers of persons who did not agree with the Church, and who are known by the names of Waldenses and Albigenses. The opinions of these two sects differed greatly from each other. The Waldenses, whose name was given to them from Peter Waldo, of Lyons, who founded the sect about the year 1170, were a quiet set of people, something like the Quakers of our own time. They dressed and lived plainly, they were mild in their manners, and used some rather affected ways of speech: they thought all war and all oaths wrong, they did not acknowledge the claims of the clergy, and, although they attended the services of the Church, it is said that they secretly mocked at them. They were fond of reading the Holy Scripture in their own language, while the Church would only allow it to be read in Latin, which was understood by few except the clergy, and not by all of *them*. And so eager were the

Waldenses to bring people to their own way of thinking that we are told of one of them, a poor man, who, after his day's work, used to swim across a river in wintry nights, that he might reach a person whom he wished to convert.

The Albigenses, on whom the persecution chiefly fell, held something like the doctrines of Manes (see I., 121), so that they could not properly be considered as Christians at all. But, although we cannot think well of their doctrines, the treatment of these people was so cruel and so treacherous as to raise the strongest feelings of anger and horror in all who read the accounts of it. Tens of thousands were slain, and their rich and beautiful country was turned into a desert.

The chief leader of the crusade in the south of France was Simon de Montfort, father of that Earl Simon who is famous in the history of England. Innocent, although he seems to have been much deceived by those who reported matters to him, was grievously to blame for having given too much countenance to the cruelties and injustice which were practised against the unhappy Albigenses.

Among the clergy who accompanied the Crusaders into southern France and tried to bring over the Albigenses and Waldenses to the Roman Church was a Spaniard named Dominic, who afterwards became famous as the founder of an order of mendicant friars (that is to say, *begging brothers*). His object was to show that the asceticism of which the heretics were so proud could not equal that of orthodox Christians, and also to provide a body of men learned enough to argue with the Albigenses and to prove that their teaching was false.

The Waldenses and Albigenses had been used to reproach the clergy of the Church for their habits of pomp and luxury, and Dominic had done what he could to meet these charges by the plainness and

hardness of the life which he and his companions led while labouring in the south of France. When he resolved to found a new order he carried the notion of poverty to an extreme. His followers were to be not only poor, but beggars. They were to live on alms, and from day to day, refusing any gifts of money large enough to give the notion of a settled provision for their needs.

Part IV

About the same time another great begging order was founded by Francis, who was born in 1182 at Assisi, a town in the Italian duchy of Spoleto. When Francis heard in church our Lord's charge to His apostles, that they should go forth without money in their purses, or a staff, or scrip, or shoes, or changes of raiment (St. Matt. x. 9, 10), he went before the bishop of Assisi, and, stripping off all his other clothes, he set forth to preach repentance without having anything on him but a rough, grey, woollen frock, with a rope tied round his waist. He believed that he was called by a vision to repair a certain church, and he set about gathering the money for this purpose by singing and begging in the streets. He felt an especial charity for lepers, who, on account of their loathsome disease, were shut out from the company of men, and were subject to miseries of many kinds; and although many hospitals had already been founded in various countries for these unfortunate people, the kindness which Francis showed to them had a great effect in lightening their lot, so far as human fellow-feeling could do so.

Francis wished his followers to study humility in all ways. They were to seek to be despised, and were told to be uneasy if they met with usage of any other kind. They were not to let themselves be called *brethren* but *little brethren;* they must try to be reckoned as less than any other persons. They were

especially to be on their guard against the pride of learning; and, in order to preserve them from the danger of this, Francis would hardly allow them even a book of the Psalms.

Francis was very fond of animals, which he treated as reasonable creatures, speaking to them by the names of brothers and sisters. He used to call his own body *brother ass,* on account of the heavy burdens and the hard usage which it had to bear. Many stories are told of his love for animals. He kept a sheep in church, and it is said that the creature, without any training, used to take part in the services by kneeling and bleating at proper times. He preached to flocks of birds on the duty of thanking their Maker for His goodness to them; nay, he preached to fishes, to worms, and even to flowers.

Perhaps the prettiest story of this kind is one about his dealing with a wolf which infested the neighbourhood of Gubbio. Finding that everyone in the place was overcome by fear of this fierce beast, Francis went out boldly to the forest where the wolf lived, and, meeting him, began to talk to him about the wickedness of killing, not only brute animals, but men; and he promised that, if the wolf would give up such evil ways, the citizens of Gubbio would maintain him. He then held out his right hand; whereupon the wolf put his paw into it as a sign of agreement, and allowed the saint to lead him into the town. The people of Gubbio were only too glad to fulfil the promise which Francis had made for them; and they kept the wolf handsomely, giving him his meals by turns, until he died of old age, and in such general respect that he was lamented by all Gubbio.

Francis, towards the end of his life, received in his body what are called the *stigmata* (that is to say, the marks of the wounds which were made in our Lord's body at the crucifixion). He is not the only person to whom this has happened; and however

strange it may seem to us, modern investigation has shown that such an event is not necessarily miraculous.

When St. Dominic and St. Francis each applied to Pope Innocent for his approval of their designs to found new orders, he was not eager to give it; but, on thinking the matter over, he granted them what they asked. Each of them soon gathered followers, who spread into all lands. The Franciscans, especially, made converts from heathenism by missions; and these orders, by their rough and plain habits of life, made their way to the hearts of the poorest classes to an extent which had never been known before. And the influence which they thus gained was all used for the papacy, which found them the most active and useful of all its servants.

In the year 1215, Innocent held a great council at Rome, which is known as the Fourth Lateran Council, and is to be remembered for two of its canons; by one of which it was made the duty of everyone to confess to the priest of his parish at least once a year; and by the other, the theory of Transubstantiation was declared to be a dogma necessary to salvation. The Church had always taught that in the Holy Eucharist the bread and wine become in some way the Body and Blood of Christ. In the ignorant ages which followed the fall of the Roman empire, this belief was held quite literally. St. Thomas Aquinas, the greatest theologian of the Middle Ages, devised the theory of Transubstantiation, in order to reconcile the current teaching of the Church with the best thought of his time. According to this theory, all material things consist of two parts: the "accidents"—that is, the properties of being able to be seen, touched, weighed, measured, etc; and the "substance" which underlies the accidents, and which cannot be seen, touched, weighed, measured, or perceived in any way. The consecrated elements in the Holy Eucharist are,

according to this theory, still bread and wine as to their "accidents," but the "substance" of them is changed into the "substance" of the Body and Blood of Christ. We cannot believe this theory to be necessary to salvation, because there is no trace of it in Holy Scripture; and we do not think it satisfactory, because it involves an unnecessary miracle, and because few people now accept the theory of "substance" and "accidents" on which it is based. The doctrine of Transubstantiation, which was first defined by the Lateran Council in 1215, is not to be confused with the doctrine of the Real Presence, which has been the teaching of the whole Church from the earliest times.

CHAPTER XIV

FREDERICK II.—ST. LOUIS OF FRANCE

(A.D. 1220–1270)

Part I

The popes still tried to stir up the Christians of the West for the recovery of the Holy Land; and there were crusading attempts from time to time, although without much effect. One of these crusades was undertaken in 1228 by Frederick II., an emperor who was all his life engaged in struggles against one pope after another. Frederick had taken the cross when he was very young; but when once anyone had done so, the popes thought that they were entitled to call on him to fulfil his promise at any time they pleased, no matter what other business he might have on his hands. He was expected to set off on a crusade whenever the pope might bid him, although it might be ruinous to him to be called away from his own affairs at that time. The reason why the popes were so opposed to Frederick was that, besides being emperor,

he had inherited Naples and Sicily from his mother; and so the papal territory had his land on the south as well as on the north. But Naples was a papal fief and if Frederick did anything the pope did not like, the latter could say: "If you as my vassal will not obey me, you cannot complain if I stir up your vassals in Germany to disobey you." Frederick was not a good man; and he was accused of tendencies towards Islam, and even of sorcery.

In this way, then, the popes had got a hold on Frederick, and when he answered their summons by saying that his affairs at home would not just then allow him to go on a crusade, they treated this excuse as if he had refused altogether to go; they held him up to the world as a faithless man, and threatened to put his lands under an interdict (see II., 59), and to take away his crown. And when at last Frederick found himself able to go to the Holy Land, the pope and his friends set themselves against him with all their might, saying that he was not hearty in the cause, and even that he was not a Christian at all. So that, although Frederick made a treaty with the Moslems by which a great deal was gained for the Christians, and Jerusalem itself was recovered, it came to little or nothing, because the popes would not confirm it.

There was very much in Frederick II. that we cannot approve of or excuse; but he met with hard usage from the popes, and after his death (A.D. 1250) they pursued his family with constant hatred, until the last heir, a spirited young prince named Conradin, who boldly attempted to recover the dominions of his family in Southern Italy, was made prisoner and executed at Naples in 1268.

Part II

At the same time as Frederick lived a sovereign of a very different kind, Louis IX. of France, who is

commonly called St. Louis, and deserves the name of *saint* better than very many persons to whom it is given. He laboured very earnestly to live up to his Christian profession as it was generally understood in his time. He attended several services in church every day, and when he was told that his nobles found fault with this, he answered, that no one would have blamed him if he had spent twice as much time in hunting or in playing at dice. He was diligent in all other religious exercises, he refrained from all worldly sports and pastimes, and, as far as could be, he shunned the pomp of royalty. He was very careful never to use any words but such as were fit for a Christian. He paid great respect to clergy and monks, and said that if he could divide himself into two, he would give one half to the Dominicans and the other half to the Franciscans. It is even said that at one time he would himself have turned friar, if his queen had not persuaded him that he would do better by remaining a king and studying to govern well and to benefit the Church.

But with all this, Louis took care that the popes should not get more power over the French Church than he thought due to them.

In 1244 Jerusalem was taken by the Mongols, a barbarous heathen people, who had none of that respect which the Moslems had shown for the holy places of the Jewish and Christian religions; thus these holy places were now profaned in a way which had not been known before, and stories of outrages done by the new conquerors, with cries for help from the Christians of the Holy Land, reached the West. These Mongols overran the whole of Asia, from China to the Mediterranean; and destroyed the Moslem khalifate at Bagdad, which was still held by the degenerate heirs of Haroun-al-Raschid.

Soon after this King Louis had a dangerous illness, in which his life was given over. He had been for

some time speechless, and was even supposed to be dead, when he asked that the cross might be given to him; and as soon as he had thus engaged himself to the crusade he began to recover. His wife, his mother, and others tried to persuade him that he was not bound by his promise, because it had been made at a time when he was not master of himself; but Louis would not listen to such excuses, and resolved to carry it out faithfully. The way which he took to enlist companions was very curious. On the morning of Christmas Day, when a very solemn service was to be held in the chapel of his palace (a chapel which is still to be seen, and is among the most beautiful buildings in Paris), he caused dresses to be given to the nobles as they were going in; for this was then a common practice with kings at the great festivals of the Church. But when the French lords, after having received their new robes in a place which was nearly dark, went on into the chapel, which was bright with hundreds of lights, each of them found that his dress was marked with a cross, so that, according to the notions of the time, he was bound to go to the holy war.

Part III

The king did what he could to raise troops, and appointed his mother, Queen Blanche, to govern the kingdom during his absence; and, after having passed a winter in the island of Cyprus, he reached Damietta, in Egypt, on June 5, 1249. For a time all went well with the Crusaders; but soon a change took place, and everything seemed to turn against them. They lost some of their best leaders; a plague broke out and carried off many of them; they suffered from famine, so that they were even obliged to eat their horses; and the enemy, by opening the sluices of the Nile, let loose on them the waters of the river, which carried away a multitude. Louis himself was very

ill, and at length he was obliged to surrender to the enemy, and to make peace on terms far worse than those which he had before refused.

But even although he was a prisoner, his saintly life made the Moslems look on him with reverence; so that when the Sultan to whom he had become prisoner was murdered by his own people, they thought of choosing the captive Christian king for their chief. Louis refused to make any treaty for his deliverance unless all his companions might have a share in it; and, although he might have been set free earlier, he refused to leave his captivity until all the money was made up for the ransom of himself and his followers. On being at length free to leave Egypt, he went into the Holy Land, where he visited Nazareth with deep devotion. But, although he eagerly desired to see Jerusalem, he denied himself this pleasure, from a fear that the crusading spirit might die out if the first of Christian kings should consent to visit the Holy City without delivering it from the unbelievers.

After an absence of six years, Louis was called back to France by tidings that his mother, whom he had left as regent of the kingdom, was dead (A.D. 1254). But he did not think that his crusading vow was yet fulfilled; and sixteen years later he set out on a second attempt, which was still more unfortunate than the former. On landing at Tunis, he found that the Arabs, instead of joining him, as he had expected, attacked his force; but these were not his worst enemies. At setting out, the king had been too weak to bear armour or to sit on horseback; and after landing he found that the bad climate, with the want of water and of wholesome food, spread death among his troops. One of his own sons, Tristan, who had been born during the king's captivity in Egypt, fell sick and died. Louis himself, whose weak state made him an easy victim to disease, died on August 25,

1270, after having shown in his last hours the piety which had throughout marked his life. And, although his eldest son, Philip, recovered from an attack which had seemed likely to be fatal, the Crusaders were obliged to leave that deadly coast with their number fearfully lessened, and without having gained any success. Philip, on his return to France, had to carry with him the remains of his father, of his brother, of one of his own children, and of his brother-in-law, the king of Navarre. Such was the sad end of an expedition undertaken by a saintly king for a noble purpose, but without heeding those rules of prudence which, if they could not have secured success, might at least have taught him to provide against some of the dangers which were fatal to him.

CHAPTER XV

PETER OF MURRONE

(A.D. 1294)

In that age the papacy was sometimes long vacant, because the cardinals,[1] who were the highest in rank of the Roman clergy, and to whom the choice of a pope belonged, could not agree. In order to overcome this difficulty, rules were made for the purpose of forcing the cardinals to make a speedy choice. Thus, at a council which was held by Pope Gregory X. at Lyons, in 1274 (chiefly for the sake of restoring peace and fellowship between the Greek and Latin Churches), a canon was made for the election of

[1] Cardinals are, properly speaking, the bishops of the province of Rome and the clergy of the diocese of Rome. As the power of the pope increased, the cardinals, who formed his council, came to rank next to him, so that now even archbishops regard the "sacred purple" of the cardinalship as a great honour.

popes. This canon directed that the cardinals should meet for the choice of a new pope within ten days after the last pope's death; that they should all be shut up in a large room, which, from their being locked in together, was called the *conclave*;[1] that they should have no means of speaking or writing to any person outside, or of receiving any letters; that their food should be supplied through a window; that, if they did not make their choice within three days, their provisions should be stinted, and if they delayed five days more, nothing should be given them but bread and water. By such means it was thought that the cardinals might be brought to settle the election of a pope as quickly as possible.

We can well believe that the cardinals did not like to be put under such rules. They contrived that later popes should make some changes in them, and tried to go on as before, putting off the election so long as seemed desirable for the sake of their own selfish objects. At one time, when there had been no pope for six months, the people of Viterbo confined the cardinals in the public hall of their city until an election should be made. At another time, the cardinals were shut up in a Roman monastery, where six of them died of the bad air. But one cardinal, who was more knowing than the rest, drove off the effect of the air by keeping up fires in all his rooms, even through the hottest weather; and at length he was chosen pope.

On the death of this pope, Nicolas IV. (A.D. 1292), the Roman See was vacant for two years and a quarter; and when the cardinals then met, it seemed as if they could not fix on any successor. But one day one of them told the rest that a holy man had had a vision, threatening heavy judgments unless a pope were chosen within a certain time; and he gave such an account of this holy man that all the cardinals were

[1] *Con* meaning *together*, and *clavis* meaning *a key*.

struck at once with the idea of choosing *him* for pope. His name was Peter of Murrone. He lived as a hermit in a narrow cell on a mountain; and there he was found by certain bishops who were sent by the cardinals to tell him of his election. He was seventy-two years of age, roughly dressed, with a long white beard, and thin from fasting and hard living. He could speak no other tongue than the common language of the country-folk around, and he was quite unused to business of any kind, so that he allowed himself to be led by anyone who would take the trouble. The fame of Peter's holiness had been widely spread, and he was even supposed to do miracles; so that his election was welcomed by multitudes. Two hundred thousand persons flocked to see his coronation, where the old man appeared in the procession riding on an ass, with his reins held by the king of Naples on one side and by the king's son on the other (A.D. 1294).

This king of Naples, Charles II., got the poor old pope completely into his power. He made him take up his abode at Naples, where Celestine V. (as he was now called) tried to carry on his old way of life by getting a cell built in his palace, just like his old dwelling on the Rock of Fumone; and into this little place he would withdraw for days, leaving all the work of his office to be done by some cardinals whom he trusted.

Other stories are told which show that Celestine was quite unfit for his office. The cardinals soon came to think that they had made a great mistake in choosing him; and at length the poor old man came to think so too. One of the cardinals, Benedict Gaetani, who had gained a great influence over his mind, persuaded him that the best thing he could do was to resign; and, after having been pope about five months, Celestine called the cardinals together, and read to them a paper, in which he said that he was too old

and too weak to bear the burden of his office; that he wished to return to his former life of quiet and contemplation. He then put off his robes, took once more the rough dress which he had worn as a hermit, and withdrew to his old abode. But the jealousy of his successor did not allow him to remain there in peace. It was feared that the reverence in which the old hermit was held by the common people might lead to some disturbance; and to prevent this he was shut up in close confinement, where he lived only about ten months. The poorer people had all kinds of strange notions about his holiness and his supposed miracles; and about twenty years after his death he was admitted into the Roman list of saints.

CHAPTER XVI

BONIFACE VIII.

(A.D. 1294–1303)

PART I

IN Celestine's place was chosen Benedict Gaetani, who, although even older than the worn-out and doting late pope, was still full of strength, both in body and in mind. Benedict (who took the name of Boniface VIII.) is said to have been very learned, especially in matters of law; but his pride and ambition led him into attempts which ended in his own ruin, and did serious harm to the papacy.

In the year 1300 Boniface set on foot what was called the Jubilee. You will remember the Jubilee which God in the Law of Moses commanded the Israelites to keep (Lev. xxv.). But this new Jubilee had nothing to do with the Law of Moses, and was more like some games which were celebrated every hundredth year by the ancient Romans. Nothing of

the sort had ever before been known among Christians; but when the end of the thirteenth century was at hand, it was found that people's minds were full of a fancy that the year 1300 ought to be a time of some great celebration. Nay, they were even made to believe that such a way of keeping every hundredth year had been usual from the beginning of the Church, although there was no ground whatever for this notion; and one or two lying old men were brought forward to pretend that when children they had attended a former jubilee a hundred years before!

How the expectation of the jubilee was produced we do not know. Most likely Boniface had something to do with it; at all events, he took it up and reaped the profits of it. He sent forth letters offering extraordinary spiritual benefits to all who should visit Rome and the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul during the coming year; and immense numbers of people flocked together from all parts of Europe. It is said that in the course of the year there were two hundred thousand strangers in Rome; for as some went away, others came to fill up their places. The crowd is described to us as if, in the streets and on the bridge leading to the great church of St. Peter, an army were marching each way.

It is said that Boniface appeared one day in the robes of a pope, and next day in those of an emperor, with a sword in his hand, and that he declared to some ambassadors that he was both pope and emperor. And after all this display of his pride and grandeur, he found himself much enriched by the offerings which the pilgrims had made; for these were so large, that in one church alone (as we are told) two of the clergy were employed day and night in gathering them in with long rakes. If this be anything like the truth, the whole amount collected from the pilgrims at the jubilee must have been very large indeed.

Part II

Boniface became involved in serious quarrels with princes and others; but the most serious of them all was a quarrel with Philip IV. of France, who is called *The Fair* on account of his good looks—not that there was any fairness in his character, for it would not be easy to name anyone more utterly *un*fair. If Boniface wished to exalt himself above princes, Philip, who was a thoroughly hard, cold, selfish man, was no less desirous to get the mastery over the clergy; and it was natural that between two such persons differences should arise. We need not mention the particulars, except that Boniface wrote letters which seemed to forbid the clergy of any kingdom to pay taxes and other dues to their sovereign, and to claim for the pope a right to dispose of the kingdoms of the earth. Philip, provoked by this, held meetings of what were called the *estates* of France—clergy, nobles, and commons—and charged the pope with all sorts of vices and crimes, even with disbelief of the Christian faith. The estates declared against the pope's claims; and when Boniface summoned a council of bishops from all countries to meet at Rome, Philip forbade the French bishops to obey, and all but a few stayed away. One of the pope's letters to the king was cut in pieces and thrown into the fire, and the burning was proclaimed through the streets of Paris with the sound of the trumpet.

The pope was greatly enraged by Philip's conduct. He prepared a bull by which the king was declared to be excommunicated and to be deprived of his crown; and it was intended to publish this bull on September 8, 1303, at Anagni, Boniface's native place, where he was spending the summer months. But on the day before something took place which hindered the carrying out of the pope's design.

Early in his reign Boniface had been engaged in a

quarrel with the Colonnas, one of the most powerful among the great princely families of Rome. He had persecuted them bitterly, had deprived them of their estates and honours, and, after having seized by treachery a fortress belonging to them, he had caused it to be utterly destroyed, and the ground on which it stood to be ploughed up and sown with salt. The Colonnas were scattered in all directions, and it is said that one of them, named James, who was a very rough and violent man, had been for a time in captivity among pirates, and had been delivered from this condition by the money of the French king, who wished to make use of him.

On September 7, 1303, this James Colonna, with other persons in King Philip's service, appeared at Anagni with an armed force, and made their way to the pope's palace. Boniface sent to ask what they wanted; and in answer they required that he should give up his office, should restore to the Colonnas all that they had lost, and should put himself into the hands of James Colonna. On his refusal, they set fire to the doors of a church which adjoined the palace, and rushed in through the flames. Boniface heard the forcing of the doors which were between them and the room in which he was; and as one door after another gave way with a crash, he declared himself resolved to die as became a pope. He put on the mantle of his office, with the imperial crown which bore the name of Constantine; he grasped his pastoral staff in one hand and the keys of St. Peter in the other, and, taking his seat on his throne, he awaited the approach of his enemies. On entering the room, even these rude and furious men were awed for a moment by his venerable and dauntless look; but James Colonna, quickly overcoming this feeling, required him to resign the papacy. "Behold my neck and my head," answered Boniface; "if I have been betrayed like Christ, I am ready to die like Christ's vicar."

Colonna savagely dragged him from the throne, and is said to have struck him on the face with his mailed hand, so as to draw blood. Others of the party poured forth torrents of reproaches. The pope was hurried into the streets, was paraded about the town on a vicious horse, with his face toward the tail, and was then thrown into prison, while the ruffians plundered the palaces and churches of Anagni.

The citizens, in their surprise and alarm, had allowed these things to pass without any check. But two days later they took heart, and with the help of some neighbours got the better of the pope's enemies and delivered him from prison. He was brought out on a balcony in the market-place, where his appearance raised the pity of all, for he had tasted nothing since his arrest. The old man begged that some good woman would save him from dying by hunger. On this the crowd burst out into cries of: "Life to you, holy father!" and immediately people hurried away in all directions, and came back with abundance of food and drink for his relief. The pope spoke kindly to all who were near him, and pronounced forgiveness of all but those who had plundered the Church.

Boniface was soon afterwards removed to Rome. But the sufferings through which he had gone had been too much for a man almost ninety years old to bear. His mind seems to have given way; and there are terrible stories (although we cannot be sure that they are true) about the manner of his death, which took place a few days after he reached the city (November 22, 1303). It was said of him: "He entered like a fox, he reigned like a lion, he went out like a dog"; and although this saying was, no doubt, made up after his end, it was commonly believed to have been a prophecy uttered by old Pope Celestine, to whom he had behaved so treacherously and so harshly.

CHAPTER XVII

THE POPES AT AVIGNON—THE RUIN OF THE TEMPLARS

(A.D. 1303–1312)

PART I

THE next pope, Benedict XI., wished to do away with the effects of Boniface's pride and ambition, and especially to soothe the king of France, whom Boniface had so greatly provoked. But Benedict died about seven months (June 27, 1304) after his election, and it was not easy to fill his place. At last, about a year after Benedict's death (June 5, 1305), Bertrand du Got, archbishop of Bordeaux, was chosen, and took the name of Clement V. It was said that he had held a secret meeting with King Philip in the depths of a forest, and that, in order to get the king's help towards his election, he bound himself to do five things which Philip named, and also a sixth thing, which was not to be spoken of until the time should come for performing it. But this story seems to have been made up because the pope was seen to follow Philip's wishes in a way that people could not understand, except by supposing that he had bound himself by some special bargain.

For some years Clement V. lived at the cost of French cathedrals and monasteries, which he visited one after another; and then (A.D. 1310) he settled at Avignon, a city on the Rhone which was part of the temporal possessions of the papacy, though close to the French frontier, where he and his successors lived for seventy years—about the same length of time that the Jews spent as captives in Babylon. Hence this stay of the popes at Avignon has sometimes been spoken of as the "Babylonish Captivity" of the

Church. Although there were some good popes in the course of those seventy years, the court of Avignon was usually full of luxury and vice, and the government of the Church grew more and more corrupt.

Philip the Fair was not content with having brought Boniface to his end, but wished to persecute and disgrace his memory. He caused all sorts of charges to be brought against the dead pope, and demanded that he should be condemned as a heretic, and that his body should be taken up and burnt. By these demands Pope Clement was thrown into great distress. He was afraid to offend Philip, and at the same time he wished to save the memory of Boniface; for if a pope were to be condemned in the way in which Philip wished, it must tell against all future popes. And besides this, if Boniface had not been a lawful pope (as Philip and his party said), the cardinals whom he had appointed were not lawful cardinals, and Clement, who had been partly chosen by their votes, could have no right to the popedom. He was, therefore, willing to do much in order to clear Boniface's memory; and Philip craftily managed to get the pope's help in another matter on condition that the charges against Boniface should not be pressed. This is supposed to have been the secret article which we have heard of in the story of the meeting in the forest.

Part II

The order of Knights Templars, which was formed in the Holy Land soon after the first crusade, has already been mentioned (II., 49). These soldiers of the cross showed at all times a courage worthy of their profession; but they also showed faults which were beyond all question. As they grew rich, they grew proud, and, from having at first been very strict in their way of living, it was believed that they had fallen into habits of luxury. They despised all men

outside their own order; they showed no respect for the kings of Jerusalem, or for the patriarchs, and were, indeed, continually quarrelling with them.

At this time the number of the Templar Knights was about fifteen thousand, and they were the finest soldiers in the world; the whole number of persons attached to the order was not less than a hundred thousand. About half of these were Frenchmen, and all the masters or heads of the order had been French.

But, although the above charges were enough to make the Templars generally disliked, they were not the worst charges against them. It was said that during the latter part of their time in the Holy Land they had grown friendly with the unbelievers, whom they were bound to oppose in arms to the uttermost; that from such company they had taken up opinions contrary to the Christian faith, and vices which were altogether against their duty as soldiers of the cross, or as Christians at all; that they practised magic and unholy rites; that when anyone was admitted into the order, he was required to deny Christ, to spit on the cross and trample on it, and to worship an idol called Baphomet (a name which seems to have meant the false prophet Mohammed).

Philip the Fair was always in need of money for carrying on his schemes, and at one time, when some tricks which he had played on the coin of his kingdom had provoked the people of Paris to rise against him, he took refuge in the house of the Templars there. This house covered a vast space of ground with its buildings, and was finer and stronger than the royal palace; and it was perhaps the sight which Philip then got of the wealth and power of the Templars that led him to attack them, in the hope of getting their property into his own hands.

Philip set about this design very craftily. He invited the masters of the Templars and of the Hospitallers (whom you will remember as the other

great military order) (see II., 48) into France, as if he wished to consult them about a crusade. The master of the Hospital was unable to obey the summons; but the master of the Temple, James de Molay, who had been in the order more than forty years, appeared with a train so splendid that Philip's greed was still more whetted by the sight of it. The master was received with great honour; but, in the meantime, orders were secretly sent to the king's officers all over the kingdom, who were forbidden to open them before a certain day; and when these orders were opened, they were found to require that the Templars should everywhere be seized and imprisoned without delay. Accordingly, at the dawn of the following day, the Templars all over France, who had had no warning and felt no suspicion, were suddenly made prisoners, without being able to resist.

Next day, which was Sunday, Philip set friars and others to preach against the Templars in all the churches of Paris; and inquiries were afterwards carried on by bishops and other judges as to the truth of the charges against them. While the trials were going on, the Templars were very harshly used. All that they had was taken away from them, so that they were in grievous distress. They were kept in dungeons, loaded with chains, ill fed and ill cared for in all ways. They were examined by tortures, which were so severe that many of them were brought, by pain, to confess everything that they were charged with, although they afterwards said that they had been driven by their sufferings to own things of which they were not at all guilty. Many were burnt in companies from time to time; at one time no fewer than fifty-four were burnt together at Paris; and such cruelties struck terror into the rest.

Some of the Templars on their trial told strange stories. They said, for instance, that some men on being admitted to the order were suddenly changed,

as if they had been made to share in some fearful secrets; that, from having been jovial and full of life, delighting in horses and hounds and hawks, they seemed to be weighed down by a deep sadness, under which they pined away. It is not easy to say what is to be made of all these stories. As to the ceremonies used at admitting members, it seems likely enough that the Templars may have used some things which looked strange and shocking, but which really meant no harm, and were properly to be understood as figures or acted parables.

The pope seems not to have known what to make of the case; but, as we have seen, he had bound himself to serve King Philip in the matter of the Templars, in order that Pope Boniface's memory might be spared. At a great council held under Clement, at Vienne, in 1312, it was decreed that the order of the Temple should be dissolved; yet it was not said that the Templars had been found guilty of the charges against them, and the question of their guilt or innocence remains to puzzle us as it puzzled the Council of Vienne.

The master of the Temple, James de Molay, was kept in prison six years and a half, and was often examined. At last, he and three other great officers of the order were condemned to imprisonment for life, and were brought forward on a platform set up in front of the cathedral of Paris that their sentence might be published. A cardinal began to read out their confessions; but Molay broke in, denying and disavowing what he had formerly said, and declaring himself worthy to die for having made false confessions through fear of death and in order to please the king. One of his companions took part with him in this; but the other two, broken down in body and in spirit by their long confinement, had not the courage to join them. Philip, on hearing what had taken place, gave orders that James de Molay and the other who took part with him

should be burnt without delay; and on the same day they were led forth to death on a little island in the River Seine (which runs through Paris), while Philip from the bank watched their sufferings. Molay begged that his hands might be unbound; and, as the flames rose around him and his companion, they firmly declared the soundness of their faith, and the innocence of the order.

Within nine months after this, Philip died at the age of forty-six (A.D. 1314); and within a few years his three sons, of whom each had in turn been king of France, were all dead. Philip's family was at an end, and the crown passed to one of his nephews. And while the clergy supposed those misfortunes to be the punishment of Philip's attacks on Pope Boniface, the people in general regarded them as brought on by his persecution of the Templars. It is not for us to pass such judgments at all; but these things show the feelings with which Philip's actions and his calamities were viewed by the people of his own time.

In other countries, such as England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany, and Spain, the Templars were arrested and brought to trial; and, rightly or wrongly, the order was dissolved. Its members were left to find some other kind of life; and its property was made over to the order of the Hospital, or to some other military order. In France, however, Philip contrived to lay his hands on so much that the Hospitallers for a time were rather made poorer than richer by this addition to their possessions.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE POPES AT AVIGNON (*continued*)
(A.D. 1314–1352)

Pope Clement V. died a few months before Philip (April, 1314), and was succeeded by John XXII., a Frenchman, who was seventy years old at the time of his election, and lived to be ninety. The most remarkable thing in John's reign was his quarrel with Louis of Bavaria, who had been chosen emperor by some of the electors, while others voted for Frederick of Austria. For the choice of an emperor (or rather of a king of the Romans) had by this time been placed in the hands of seven German princes, of whom four were laymen and three were the archbishops of Mainz, Cologne, and Treves. The four lay electors were the king of Bohemia and the "Electors" (as they were called) of Saxony, Brandenburg, and the Palatinate; even the three clerical electors were more commonly called electors than archbishops. The kings of Germany were called "King of the Romans" before their coronation by the pope, and "Roman Emperor" after it.

Louis of Bavaria and Frederick of Austria were the rival candidates for the imperial throne; and Pope John was well pleased to stand by and watch their quarrel, so long as they only weakened each other without coming to any settlement of the question. But when Louis had got the better of Frederick, then John stepped in and told him that it was for the pope to judge in such a case which of the two ought to be king of the Romans. And he forbade all people to obey Louis as king, and declared that whatever he might have done as king should be of no effect. But people had become used to such sentences, so that they would not obey them unless they thought them

just; and thus Pope John's thunder was very little heeded. Although he excommunicated Louis, the sentence had no effect; and by this and other things (especially a quarrel which John had with a part of the Franciscan order) people were led to inquire into the rights of the papacy in a way which was quite new, so that their thoughts took a direction which was very dangerous to the power of the popes.

Louis answered the pope by setting up an anti-pope against him. But this was a thing which had never succeeded; and so John's rival was obliged to submit, and, in token of the humblest repentance, appeared with a rope round his neck at Avignon, where the rest of his life was spent in confinement.

The pope on his part set up a rival emperor, Charles of Moravia, son of that blind King John of Bohemia whose death at the battle of Crecy is known to us from the history of England. But Charles found little support in Germany so long as Louis was alive.

The next pope, Benedict XII. (A.D. 1334-1342), although of himself he would have wished to make peace with Louis, found himself prevented from doing so by the king of France; and his successor, Clement VI. (A.D. 1342-1352), who had once been tutor to Charles of Moravia, strongly supported his old pupil. Louis died excommunicate in 1347, and was the last emperor who had to bear that sentence. But, although he suffered much on account of it, he had yet kept his title of emperor as long as he lived; and he left a strong party of supporters, who were able to make good terms for themselves before Charles was allowed to take peaceable possession of the empire.

CHAPTER XIX

RELIGIOUS SECTS AND PARTIES

WHILE the popes were thus trying to lord it over all men, from the emperor downwards, there were many who hated their doctrines and would not allow their authority. The Albigenses and Waldenses, although persecuted as we have seen, still remained in great numbers, and held the opinions which had drawn so much suffering on them. The Albigenses, indeed, were but a part of a greater body, the *Cathari,* who were spread through many countries, and had an understanding and fellowship with each other which were kept up by secret means. And there were other sects, of which it need only be said here that in general their opinions were very wild and strange, and very unlike, not only to the papal doctrines, but to the Christianity of the Bible and of the early Church. Whenever any of the clergy, from the pope downwards, gave an occasion by pride or ambition, or worldly living, or neglect of duty, or any other fault, these sects took care to speak of the whole Church as having fallen from the faith, and to gain converts for themselves by pointing out the blemishes which were allowed in it.

On the other hand, the Inquisition was set on foot for the discovery and punishment of such doctrines as the Roman Church condemned; and it was worked with a secrecy, an injustice, and a cruelty which made men quake with fear wherever it was established. It is a comfort to know that in the British Isles this hateful tyranny never found a footing.

There were large numbers of persons called Mystics, who thought to draw near to God, and to give up their own will to His will, in a way beyond what ordinary believers could understand. Among these was a

society which called itself the *Friends of God;* and these friends belonged to the Church at the same time that they had this closer and more secret tie of union among themselves. There is a very curious story how John Tauler, a Dominican friar of Strasburg, was converted by the chief of this party, Nicolas of Basel. Tauler had gained great fame as a preacher, and had reached the age of fifty-two, when Nicolas, who had been one of his hearers, visited him, and convinced him that he was nothing better than a Pharisee. In obedience to the direction of Nicolas, Tauler shut himself up for two years, without preaching or doing any other work as a priest, and even without studying. When at the end of that time, he came forth again to the world, and first tried to preach, he burst into tears and quite broke down; but on a second trial, it was found that he preached in a new style, and with vastly more of warmth and of effect than he had ever done before. Tauler was born in 1294, and died in 1361.

In these times many were very fond of trying to make out the future from the prophecies of the Old Testament and of the Revelation, and some people of both sexes supposed themselves to have the gift of prophecy. And in seasons of great public distress multitudes would break out into some wild sort of religious display, which for a time carried everything before it, and seemed to do a great deal of good, although the wiser people looked on it with distrust; but after a while it passed away, leaving those who had taken part in it rather worse than better than before. Among the outbreaks of this kind was that of the *Flagellants*, which showed itself several times in various places. The first appearance of it was in 1260, when it began at Perugia, in the middle of Italy, and spread both southwards to Rome and northwards to France, Hungary, and Poland. In every city large companies of men, women, and children moved about the streets, with their faces

covered but their bodies naked down to the waist. They tossed their limbs wildly, they dashed themselves down on the ground in mud or snow, and cruelly *flagellated* (or flogged) themselves with whips, while they shouted out shrieks and prayers for mercy and pardon.

Again, after a terrible plague called the Black Death, which raged from Sicily to Greenland about 1349 (see II., 27), parties of flagellants went about half-naked, singing and scourging themselves. Whenever the Saviour's sufferings were mentioned in their hymns, they threw themselves on the ground like logs of wood, with their arms stretched out in the shape of a cross, and remained prostrate in prayer until a signal was given them to rise.

These movements seemed to do good at first by reconciling enemies and by forcing the thoughts of death and judgment on ungodly or careless people. But after a time they commonly took the line of throwing contempt on the clergy and on the sacraments and other usual means of grace. And when the stir caused by them was over, the good which they had appeared to do proved not to be lasting.

CHAPTER XX

JOHN WYCLIF

(BORN ABOUT 1324. DIED 1384)

At this time arose a reformer of a different kind from any of those who had gone before him. He was a Yorkshireman, named John Wyclif, who had been educated at Oxford, and had become famous there as a teacher of philosophy before he began to show any difference of opinions from those which were common in the Church. Ever since the time when

King John disgusted his people by his shameful submission to the pope (see II., 59), there had been a strong feeling against the papacy in England, and it had been provoked more and more, because the popes were always drawing money from this country and thrusting foreigners into the richer places of the English Church. These foreigners squeezed all that they could out of their parishes or offices in England, but they never went near them, and would have been unable to do much good if they had gone, because they did not understand the English language. And another complaint was, that while the popes lived at Avignon, they were so much under the control of their neighbours, the kings of France, that the English had no chance of fair play if any question arose between the two nations, and the pope could make himself the judge. And thus the English had been made ready enough to give a hearing to anyone who might teach them that the popes had no right to the power which they claimed.

There had always been a great unwillingness to pay the tribute which King John had promised to the Roman see. If the king was weak, he paid it; if he was strong, he was more likely to refuse it. And thus it was that the money had been refused by Edward I., paid by Edward II., and again refused by Edward III., whom Pope Urban V., in 1366, asked to pay up for thirty-three years at once. In this case, Wyclif took the side of his king, and maintained that the tribute was not rightly due to the pope. And from this he went on to attack the corruptions of the Church in general. He set himself against the begging friars, who had come to great power, worming themselves in everywhere, so that they had brought most of the poorer people to look only to them as spiritual guides, and to think nothing of the parish clergy. In order to oppose the friars, Wyclif sent about the country a set of men whom he called

poor priests. These were very like the friars in their rough dress and simple manner of living, but taught more according to a plain understanding of the Scriptures than to the doctrines of the Church, as then understood. It is said that once when Wyclif was very ill, and was supposed to be dying, some friars went to him in the hope of getting him to confess that he repented of what he had spoken and written and done against them. But Wyclif, gathering all his strength, rose up in his bed, and said, in words which were partly taken from the 118th Psalm: "I shall not die but live, and declare the evil deeds of the friars." He was several times brought before assemblies of bishops and clergy, to answer for his opinions, but he found powerful friends to protect him, and always came off without hurt.

It was in Wyclif's time that the rebellion of Wat Tyler and Jack Straw broke out, as we read in the history of England (A.D. 1381), but although Wyclif's enemies would have been very glad to lay some of the blame of it at his door, it is quite certain that he had nothing to do with it in any way.

In those days most books were written in Latin, so that none but learned people could read them. But Wyclif, although he wrote some books in Latin for the learned, took to writing other books in good, plain English, such as everyone could understand, and thus his opinions became known to people of all classes. But the greatest thing that he did was the translation of the Bible into English. This translation, which was carried out under Wyclif's influence, by some of his friends, was the first that was made into anything like modern English. The Church, naturally, required that any translation of the Bible should receive its guarantee as a sound translation: people were allowed to possess and to read Wyclif's Bible if they could get permission to do so from the bishop of the diocese, and there is no doubt that it was widely read,

though the preface to it was not sanctioned. It was not for his translation of the Bible that Wyclif was condemned, but for his denial, on philosophical grounds, of Transubstantiation (though he certainly believed in the Real Presence), and for his objection to the support of the clergy by endowments. He was in some ways the forerunner of Socialism rather than of Protestantism.

It is said that Pope Urban V. summoned Wyclif to appear before him at Rome, but Wyclif, who was old, and had been very ill, excused himself from going, and soon after this he died, on the last day of the year 1384.

Wyclif's followers were called *Lollards,* possibly from their habit of *lulling* or chanting to themselves. After his death they went much farther than he had done, and some of them grew very wild in their opinions, so that they would not only have made strange changes in religious doctrine, but would have upset the government of kingdoms. Against them a law was made by which persons who differed from the doctrines of the Church were sentenced to be burnt, under the name of heretics, and many Lollards suffered in consequence. The most famous of these was Sir John Oldcastle, Lord Cobham, a brave but rather hot-headed and violent soldier, who was suspected of meaning to start a rebellion. For this and his religious opinions together he was burnt in Smithfield, which was then just outside London (A.D. 1417), the same place where, at a later time, many suffered for their religion in the reigns of Henry VIII. and Mary.

CHAPTER XXI

THE POPES RETURN TO ROME

(A.D. 1367–1377)

WHILE the popes lived at Avignon, Rome suffered very much from their absence. There was nothing like a regular government. The great Roman families such as the Colonnas (II., 79) carried on their quarrels with each other, and no one attempted or was strong enough to check them. Murders, robberies, and violent deeds of all sorts were common. The vast and noble buildings which had remained from ancient times were neglected, the churches and palaces fell to decay; even the manners of the Romans became rough and rude, from the want of anybody to teach them better and to show them an example.

And not only Rome, but all Italy missed the pope's presence. The princes carried on their wars by means of hired bands of soldiers, who were mostly strangers from beyond the Alps. These bands hired out their services to anyone who would pay enough, and although they were faithful to each employer for the time that was agreed on, they were ready at the end of that time to engage themselves for money to one who might be their late master's enemy. The most famous captain of such hireling soldiers was Sir John Hawkwood, an Englishman, who is commonly said to have been a tailor in London before he took to arms, but this may be a mistake. He fought for many years in Italy, and a picture of him on horseback, which serves for his monument, is still to be seen in Florence Cathedral.

The Romans again and again entreated the popes to come back to their city. The chief poet and writer of the age, Petrarch, urged them both in verse and in prose to return. But the cardinals, who at this

time were mostly Frenchmen, had grown so used to the pleasures of Avignon that they did all they could to keep the popes there. At length, in 1367, Urban V. made his way back to Rome, where both the emperors, the Eastern and the Western, met to do him honour; but after a short stay in Italy he returned to Avignon, where he soon after died (A.D. 1370). His successor, Gregory XI., however, was more resolute. At the urgent request of St. Catherine of Siena, one of the best and holiest women of that age, he decided to leave Avignon for good, and he brought the papal court back to Rome in 1377. This was the end of what was styled the seventy years' captivity in Babylon (see II., 82).

CHAPTER XXII

THE GREAT SCHISM OF THE WEST

(A.D. 1378–1410)

Gregory XI. died in 1378, and the choice of a successor to him was no easy matter. The Romans were bent on having a countryman of their own, that they might be sure of his continuing to live among them. They guarded the gates, they brought into the city a number of rough and half-savage people from the hills around, to terrify the cardinals, and when these were shut up for the election, the mob surrounded the palace in which they were, with cries of: "We will have a Roman, or at least an Italian!" Day and night their shouts were kept up, with a frightful din of other kinds. They broke into the pope's cellars, got drunk on the wine, and were thus made more furious than before. At length, the cardinals, driven to extreme terror, made choice of Bartholomew Prignano, archbishop of Bari, in South Italy, who was not one of their own number. It is certain that

he was not chosen freely, but under fear of the noise and threats of the Roman mob; but all the forms which follow after the election of a pope, including coronation, were regularly gone through, and the cardinals seem to have given their approval of the choice in such a way that they could not well draw back afterwards.

But Urban VI. (as the new pope called himself), although he had until then been much esteemed as a pious and modest man, seems to have lost his head on being raised to his new office. He held himself vastly above the cardinals, wishing to reform them violently, and to lord it over them in a style to which they had not been used. By such conduct he provoked them to oppose him. They objected that he had not been freely chosen, and also that he was not in his right mind; and a party of them met at Fondi and chose another pope, Clement VII., a Frenchman, who settled at Avignon.

Thus began what is called the Great Schism of the West. There were now two rival popes—one of them having his court at Rome and the other at Avignon, and the kingdoms of Europe were divided between the two. The French naturally supported Clement; the English, who were at war with France, supported Urban, while Germany remained neutral. The cost of keeping up two courts weighed heavily on Western Christendom, and all sorts of tricks were used to squeeze out fees and money on all possible occasions. For instance, Boniface IX., one of the Roman line of popes, celebrated two jubilees, with only ten years between them, although in Boniface VIII.'s time it had been intended that the jubilee was to be held only once in a hundred years.

The princes of Europe were scandalized by this division, and often tried to heal it, but in vain, for the popes, although they professed to desire such a thing, were generally far from hearty in saying so.

At length it seemed as if the breach were to be healed by a council held at Pisa in 1409, which set aside both the rivals, and elected a new pope, Alexander V. But it was found that the two old claimants would not give way, and thus the Council of Pisa, in trying to cure the evil of having two popes, had saddled the Church with a third.

Alexander did not hold the papacy quite eleven months (June, 1409, to May, 1410). He had fallen wholly under the power of a cardinal named Balthasar Cossa, and this cardinal was chosen to succeed him, under the name of John XXIII. John was one of the worst men who ever held the papacy. It is said that he had been a pirate, and that from this he had got the habit of waking all night and sleeping by day. He had been governor of Bologna, where he had indulged himself to the full in cruelty, greed, and other vices. He was even suspected of having poisoned Alexander; and although he must no doubt have been a very clever man, it is not easy to understand how the other cardinals can have elected as pope one who was so notoriously wicked.

CHAPTER XXIII

JOHN HUSS

(A.D. 1369–1414)

It seems that after a time Wyclif's opinions almost died out in England. But, meanwhile, they, or opinions very like them, were eagerly taken up in Bohemia.[1] If we look at the map of Europe, we might think that no country was less likely than Bohemia to have anything to do with England, for

[1] Bohemia is part of the country now called Czecho-Slovakia : the people whom the Germans call Bohemians call themselves Czechs.

it lies in the midst of other countries, far away from all seas, and with no harbours to which English ships could make their way. And besides this, the people are of a different race from any that have ever settled in this country, or have helped to make the English nation, and their language has no likeness to ours. But it happened that Richard II. of England married the princess Anne, granddaughter of the blind king who fell at Crecy, and daughter of the emperor Charles IV., who usually lived in Bohemia. And when Queen Anne of England died, and the Bohemian ladies and servants of her court went back to their own country, they took with them some of Wyclif's writings, which were readily welcomed there, for some of the Bohemian clergy had already begun a reform in the Church, and Wyclif's name was well-known on account of his writings of another kind.

Among those who thus became acquainted with Wyclif's opinions was a young man named John Huss. He had been an admirer of Wyclif's philosophical works; but when he first met with his reforming books, he was so little pleased with them that he wished they were thrown into the Moldau, the river which runs through Prague, the chief city of Bohemia. But Huss soon came to think differently, and heartily took up almost all Wyclif's doctrines.

Huss made many enemies among the clergy by attacking their faults from the pulpit of a chapel called Bethlehem, where he was preacher. He was, however, still so far in favour with the archbishop of Prague, that he was employed by him, together with some others, to inquire into a pretended miracle, which drew crowds of pilgrims to seek for cures at a place called Wilsnack, in the north of Germany. But he afterwards fell out of favour with the archbishop who had appointed him to this work, and he was still less liked by later archbishops.

From time to time some doctrines which were said to be Wyclif's were condemned at Prague. Huss usually declared that Wyclif had been wrongly understood, and that his real meaning was true and innocent. But at length a decree was passed that all Wyclif's books should be burnt (A.D. 1410), and thereupon a grand bonfire was made in the courtyard of the archbishop's palace, while all the church bells of the city were tolled as at a funeral. But as some copies of the books escaped the flames, it was easy to make new copies from these.

Huss was excommunicated, but he still went on teaching. In 1412, Pope John XXIII. proclaimed a crusade against Ladislaus, king of Naples, with whom he had quarrelled, and ordered that it should be preached, and that money should be collected for it all through Latin Christendom. Huss and his chief friend, whose name was Jerome, set themselves against this with all their might. They declared it to be unchristian that a crusade should be proclaimed against a Christian prince, and that the favours of the Church should be held out as a reward for paying money or for shedding of blood. One day, as a preacher was inviting people to buy his indulgences (as they were called) for the forgiveness of sins, he was interrupted by three young men, who told him that what he said was untrue, and that Master Huss had taught them better. The three were seized, and were condemned to die; and, although it would seem that a promise was afterwards given that their lives should be spared, the sentence of death was carried into effect. The people were greatly provoked by this, and when the executioner, after having cut off the heads of the three, proclaimed (as was usual): "Whosoever shall do the like, let him look for the like!" a cry burst forth from the multitude around: "We are ready to do and to suffer the like." Women dipped their handkerchiefs in the blood of the victims, and

treasured it up as a precious relic. Some of the crowd even licked the blood. The bodies were carried off by the people, and were buried in Bethlehem chapel; and Huss and others spoke of the three as martyrs.

By this affair his enemies were greatly provoked. Fresh orders were sent from Rome for the destruction of Wyclif's books, and for uttering all the heaviest sentences of the Church against Huss himself. He therefore left Prague for a time, and lived chiefly in the castles of Bohemian noblemen who were friendly to him, writing busily as well as preaching against what he supposed to be the errors of the Roman Church.

Huss was first of all a moral reformer, attacking the avarice and negligence of the clergy, and a patriot resisting the influence of the Germans in Bohemia. But the novelty of his teaching was that he appealed from the authority of the Church to the law of Christ as taught in the New Testament, and to the individual conscience. In his age this was revolutionary. But he professed to the last to be a faithful son of the Church; and therefore cannot be classed with the Continental reformers of the next century, whose attitude towards the Church was quite different.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE

(A.D. 1414–1418)

Part I

The division of the Church between three popes cried aloud for settlement in some way; and besides this there were general complaints as to the need of reform in the Church. The emperor Sigismund urged Pope John XXIII. to call a general council for the

consideration of these subjects; and, although John hated the notion of such a meeting, he could not help consenting. He wished that the council should be held in Italy, as he hoped to manage it more easily there than in any country north of the Alps; and he was very angry when Constance, a town on a large lake in Southern Germany, was chosen as the place. It seemed like an omen of misfortune when, as he was passing over a mountain on his way to the council, his carriage was upset, and he lay for a while in the snow, using bad words as to his folly in undertaking the journey; and when he came in sight of Constance at the foot of the hill, he said that it looked like a trap for foxes. In that trap Pope John was caught.

The other popes, Gregory XII. and Benedict XIII., did not attend, although both had been invited; but some time after the opening of the council (which was on November 5, 1414) the emperor Sigismund arrived. He reached Constance in a boat which had brought him across the lake very early on Christmas morning, and at the first service of the festival, which was held before daybreak, he read the Gospel which tells of the decree of Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. For the emperor had the special privilege of reading the Gospel in the Christmas service of the Church.

It was proposed that all the three popes should resign, and that a new pope should be chosen. In answer to this, John said that he was ready to resign if the others would do the same; but it soon became clear that he did not mean to keep his promise honestly. He tried by all manner of tricks to ward off the dangers which surrounded him; and, after he had more than once tried in vain to get away from Constance, he was able to escape one day when the members of the council were amusing themselves at a tournament given by a prince whom John had persuaded to take off their attention in this way. The

council, however, in his absence went on to examine the charges against him, many of which were so shocking that they were kept secret, out of regard for his office. John, by letters and messengers, asked for delay, and did all that he could for that purpose; but, notwithstanding all his arts, he was sentenced to be deposed from the papacy for simony (that is, for trafficking in holy things) (see II., 20), and for other offences. On being informed of this, he at once put off his papal robes, saying, that since he had put them on he had never enjoyed a quiet day (May 31, 1415).

Part II

John Huss, the Bohemian reformer, had been summoned to Constance, that he might give an account of himself, and had been furnished with a safe-conduct (as it was called), in which the emperor assured him of protection on his way to the council and back. But, although at first he was treated as if he were free, it was pretended, soon after his arrival, that he wished to run away; and on this excuse he was shut up in a dark and filthy prison. Huss had no friends in the council; for the reforming part of the members would have nothing to do with him, lest it should be thought that they agreed with him in everything. And when he was at length brought out from prison, where his health had suffered much, and when he was required to answer for himself, without having been allowed the use of books to prepare himself, all the parties in the council turned on him at once. His trial lasted three days. The charges against him were mostly about Wyclif's doctrines, which had been often condemned by councils at Rome and elsewhere, but which Huss was supposed to hold; and when he tried to explain that in some things he did not agree with Wyclif, nobody would believe him. Some of his bitterest persecutors were men who had

once been his friends, and had gone with him in his reforming opinions. The constitutional reformers, such as Gerson, who wished to put the council above the pope, were anxious to show that they had no sympathy with the appeal of Huss from both pope and council to the Bible and conscience.

After his trial, Huss was sent back to prison for a month, and all kinds of ways were tried to persuade him to give up the opinions which were blamed in him; but he stood firm for what he believed to be the truth. At length he was brought out to hear his sentence. He claimed the protection of the emperor, whose safe-conduct he had received (as we have seen). But Sigismund had been hard pressed by Huss' enemies, who told him that a promise made to one who is wrong in the faith is not to be kept; and the emperor had weakly and treacherously yielded, so that he could only blush for shame when Huss reminded him of the safe-conduct.

Huss was condemned to death, and was *degraded* from his Orders, as the custom was; that is to say, they first put into his hands the vessels used at the consecration of the Holy Eucharist, which were the signs of his being a priest; and by taking away these from him, they reduced him from a priest to a deacon. Then they took away the tokens of his being a deacon, and so they stripped him of his other Orders, one after another; and when at last they had turned him back into a layman, they led him away to be burnt. It is said that, as he saw an old woman carrying a faggot to the pile which was to burn him, he smiled and said: "O holy simplicity!" meaning that her intention was good, although the poor old creature was ignorant and misled. He bore his death with great patience and courage; and then his ashes and such scorched bits of his dress as remained were thrown into the Rhine, lest his followers should treasure them up as relics (July 6, 1415).

About ten months after the death of Huss, his old friend and companion, Jerome of Prague, was condemned by the council to be burnt, and suffered with a firmness which even those who were most strongly against him could not but admire (May 30, 1416).

Part III

When John XXIII. had been got rid of, Gregory XII., the most respectable of the three rival popes, consented to resign his claims. But the third pope, Benedict XIII., would hear of no proposals for his resignation, and shut himself up in a castle on the coast of Spain, where he continued to call himself pope, and even after his death two popes of his line were set up in succession. The Council of Constance, however, finding Benedict obstinate, did not trouble itself further about him, and went on to treat the papacy as vacant.

There was a great dispute whether the reform of the Church (for which people had long asked), or the choice of a new pope, should be first taken in hand; and at length it was resolved to elect a pope without further delay. The choice was to be made by the cardinals, thirty other members of the Council, elected by the different nations, and these electors were all shut up in the Exchange of Constance—a building which is still to be seen there. While the election was going on, multitudes of all ranks, and even the emperor himself among them, went from time to time in slow procession round the Exchange, chanting in a low tone litanies, in which they prayed that the choice of the electors might be guided for the good of the Church. And when at last an opening was made in the wall from within, and through it a voice proclaimed: "We have a pope: Lord Oddo of Colonna!" the news spread at once through all Constance. The people

seemed to be wild with joy that the division of the Church, which had lasted so long, was now healed. All the bells of the town pealed forth joyfully, and it is said that a crowd of not less than 80,000 people hurried at once to the Exchange. The emperor in his delight threw himself at the new pope's feet; and for hours together vast numbers thronged the cathedral, where the pope was placed on the high altar, and gave them his blessing. It was on St. Martin's Day, November 11, 1417, that this election took place; and from this the pope styled himself Martin V. But the joy which had been shown at his election was more than the effect warranted. The council had chosen a pope before taking up the reform of the Church; and the new pope was no friend to reform. During the rest of the time that the council was assembled, he did all that he could to thwart attempts at reform; and when, at the end of it, he rode away from Constance, with the emperor holding his bridle on one side and the Elector of Brandenburg on the other, while a crowd of princes, nobles, clergy, and others, as many as 40,000, accompanied him, it seemed as if the pope had become the master of all the sovereigns of the world.

The great thing done by the Council of Constance was, that it declared a general council to be above the pope, and entitled to depose popes if the good of the Church should require it. But by electing a new pope before its proposed reforms had been carried out, and, in particular, before the supremacy of councils over popes had been secured, it threw away the last chance of a constitutional reform of the papacy.

CHAPTER XXV

THE HUSSITES

(A.D. 1418–1431)

THE news of Huss' death naturally raised a general feeling of anger in Bohemia, where his followers treated his memory as that of a saint, and kept a festival in his honour. And when the emperor Sigismund, in 1419, succeeded his brother Wenceslaus in the kingdom of Bohemia, he found that he was hated by his new subjects on account of his share in the death of Huss.

But, although most of the Bohemians might now be called Hussites, there were great divisions among the Hussites themselves. The more moderate party maintained the existing Church system, and only demanded the admission of all to Communion in both kinds (that is, that the chalice should no longer be refused to communicants, a custom which had only crept in recently, and was, as the Hussites rightly held, contrary to our Lord's command); the freedom of preaching, the reform of clerical morals, and the reduction of clerical incomes. Huss himself would probably have been content with this programme. But the advanced party went much further, and rejected all Church authority. Some believed in a coming millennium; others were Communists, or held various wild beliefs. The moderate party were known as Utraquists (*i.e.*, believers in both kinds) or Calixtines; the extreme party as Taborites, from the name of their chief stronghold, a hill called Tabor.

In the summer of 1419, the first public Communion was celebrated at a place where the town of Tabor was afterwards built. It was a very different kind of ceremony from what had been usual. There were three hundred altars, but they were without any covering;

the chalices were of wood, the clergy wore only their everyday dress; and a love-feast followed, at which the rich shared with their poorer brethren. The wilder party among the Hussites now took to putting their opinions into practice. They declared churches and their ornaments, pictures, images, organs, and the like, to be abominable; and they went about in bands, destroying everything which they thought superstitious. And thus Bohemia, which had been famous for the size and beauty of its churches, was so desolated that hardly a church was left in it; and those which are now standing have almost all been built since the time when the Hussites destroyed the older churches.

The chief leader of the Taborites was John Ziska, whose name is said by some to mean *one-eyed;* and certainly he had lost an eye in early life. Ziska had such capacity for war, that, although his men were only rough peasants, armed with nothing better than clubs, flails, and similar tools, which they had been accustomed to use in agriculture, he trained them to encounter regular armies, and always came off with victory. He taught his soldiers to make their flails very dangerous weapons by tipping them with iron; and to place their waggons together in such a way that each block of waggons made a sort of little fortress, against which the force of the enemy dashed in vain. But Ziska's bravery and skill were disgraced by his savage fierceness. He never spared an enemy; he took delight in putting clergy and monks to the sword, or in burning them in pitch, and in burning and pulling down churches and monasteries. In the course of the war he lost his remaining eye; but he still continued to act as general with the same skill and success as before. His cruelty became greater continually, and the last year of his life was the bloodiest.

Ziska died in October, 1424. It is said that he directed that his skin should be taken off his body, and made into the covering of a drum, at the sound

of which he expected all enemies to flee in terror; but the story is probably not true. At his death, a part of his old companions called themselves *orphans,* as if they had lost their father, and could never find another. But other generals arose to carry on the same kind of war, while their wild followers were wrought up to a sort of fury which nothing could withstand.

On the side of the Church a holy war was proclaimed, and vast armies, made up from all nations of Europe, were gathered for the invasion of Bohemia. One of these crusades was led by Cardinal Beaufort, bishop of Winchester, and great-uncle of King Henry VI. of England; another, by a famous Italian cardinal, Julian Cesarini. But the courage and fury of the Bohemians, with their savage appearance and their strange manner of fighting, drove back all assaults, with immense loss, in one campaign after another; until Cesarini, the leader in the last crusade, was convinced that there was no hope of putting the Bohemians down by force, and that some other means must be tried.

CHAPTER XXVI

COUNCILS OF BASEL AND FLORENCE

(A.D. 1431–1439)

It had been settled at the Council of Constance that regularly from time to time there should be held a general council, by which name was then meant a council gathered from all the Western churches (that is, all churches in communion with Rome), but without any representatives of the Eastern churches; and according to this decree a council was to meet at Basel, on the Rhine, in the year 1431. It was just before the time of its opening that Cardinal Cesarini

was defeated by the Hussites of Bohemia, as we have seen. Being convinced that some gentler means ought to be tried with them, he begged the pope to allow them a hearing; and he invited them to send deputies to the Council of Basel, of which he was president.

The Bohemians did as they were asked to do, and thirty of them appeared before the council—rough, wild-looking men for the most part, headed by Procopius, who was at once a priest and a warrior, and was called "the Great," in order to distinguish him from another of the same name. A dispute, which lasted many weeks, was carried on between the leaders of these Bohemians and some members of the council; and, at length, four points were agreed to. The chief of these was, that the chalice at the Holy Communion should not be confined to the priest alone, but might be given to such grown-up persons as should desire it. This was one of the things which had been most desired by the Bohemian reformers. We need not go further into the history of the Hussites and of the parties into which they were divided; but it is worth while to remember that in Bohemia the laity were allowed to partake of the chalice for nearly two hundred years, while in all other churches under the Roman authority this was forbidden.

Soon after the meeting of the Council of Basel, the pope, whose name was Eugenius IV., grew jealous lest it should get too much power, and sent orders that it should break up. But the members were not disposed to bear this. They declared that the council was the highest authority in the Church, and superior to the pope; and they asked Eugenius to join them at Basel, and threatened to depose him if he refused. Just at that time Eugenius was driven from Rome by his people, and therefore he found it convenient to try to smooth over differences, and to keep on good terms with the council; but after a while the disagreement broke out again. The pope had called a council to meet at

Ferrara, in Italy, in order to consult with some Greeks (at the head of whom were the emperor and the patriarch of Constantinople) as to the union of the Greek and Latin Churches; and he desired the members of the Basel council to remove to Ferrara, that they might take part in the new assembly. But only a few obeyed; and those who remained at Basel were resolved to carry on their quarrel to the uttermost. First, they allowed Eugenius a certain time, within which they required him either to appear at Basel or to send someone in his stead; then, they lengthened out this time somewhat; and as he still did not appear, they first suspended him from his office, then declared him to be deposed, and at length went on to choose another pope in his stead (November 17, 1439).

The person thus chosen was Amadeus, who for nearly thirty years had been duke of Savoy, but had lately given over his dukedom to his son, and had put himself at the head of twelve old knights, who had formed themselves into an order of hermits at Ripaille, near the Lake of Geneva. The new pope bargained that he should not be required to part with the long white beard which he had worn as a hermit; but after a while, finding that it looked strange among the smooth chins of those around him, he, of his own accord, allowed it to be shaved off. But this attempt to set up an anti-pope came to very little. Felix V. (as the old duke called himself on being elected) was obliged to submit to Eugenius; and the Council of Basel, after dwindling away by degrees, and being removed from one place to another, died out so obscurely that its end was unnoticed by anyone.

Eugenius held his council at Ferrara, and afterwards removed it to Florence (A.D. 1438-39); and it seemed as if by his management the Greeks, who were very poor, and were greatly in need of help against the Turks, were brought to an agreement with the Latins as to the questions which had been so long

disputed between the churches. The union of the churches was celebrated by a grand service in the cathedral of Florence. But, as in former times (see II., 74), the Greeks found, on their return home, that their countrymen would not agree to what had been done; and thus the breach between the two divisions of the Church continued, until a few years later Constantinople was taken by the Turks, and so the Greek empire came to an end.

CHAPTER XXVII

NICOLAS V. AND PIUS II.

(A.D. 1447–1464)

THE next pope, Nicolas V., was a man who had raised himself from a humble station by his learning, ability, and good character. He was chiefly remarkable for his love of learning, and for the bounty which he spent on learned men. For learning had come to be regarded with very high honour, and those who were famous for it found themselves persons of great importance, who were welcome at the courts of princes, from the emperor down to the little dukes and lords of Italy. But we must not fancy that these learned men were all that they ought to have been. They were too commonly selfish and jealous, vain, greedy, quarrelsome, unthrifty; they flattered the great, however unworthy these might be; and in religion many of them were more like the old heathen Greeks than Christians.

In the time of Nicolas, a terrible calamity fell on Christendom by the loss of Constantinople. The Ottoman Turks, a barbarous Moslem people, had long been pressing on the Eastern empire, and swallowing up more and more of it. It was the fear of these advancing enemies that led the Greeks repeatedly

to seek for ecclesiastical union with the Latins, in the hope that they might thus get help from the West for the defence of what remained of their empire. But these reconciliations never lasted long, more especially as the Greeks did not gain that aid from their Western brethren for the sake of which they had yielded in matters of religion. One more attempt of this kind was made after the Council of Florence; but it was vain, and in 1453 the Turks, under Sultan Mohammed II., became masters of Constantinople. Constantine Palæologos, the last emperor, fell fighting sword in hand in the gate of the city. Thus, the second city in Christendom became a stronghold of Islam, and the grandest Christian cathedral in the world became a mosque, as it is still.

A great number of learned Greeks, who were scattered by this conquest, found their way into the West, bringing with them their knowledge and many Greek manuscripts; and such scholars were gladly welcomed by Pope Nicolas and others. Not only were their books bought up, but the pope sent persons to search for manuscripts all over Greece, in order to rescue as much as possible from destruction by the barbarians. Nicolas founded the famous Vatican library in the papal palace at Rome, and presented a vast number of manuscripts to it. For it was not until this very time that printing was invented, and formerly all books were written by hand, which is a slow and costly kind of work, as compared with printing. In writing out books, the whole labour has to be done for every single copy; but when a printer has once set up his type, he can print any number of copies without any other trouble than that of inking the types and pressing them on the paper, by means of a machine, for each copy that is wanted. The art of printing was brought from Germany to Rome under Nicolas V., and he encouraged it, as he did everything else which was connected with learning.

Nicolas also had a plan for rebuilding Rome in a very grand style, and began with the Church of St. Peter; which he intended to surround with palaces, gardens, terraces, libraries, and smaller churches. But he did not live to carry this work far.

One effect of the new encouragement of learning was, that scholars began to inquire into the truth of some things which had long been allowed to pass without question. Before long the story of Constantine's donation, and the false Decretals (see II., 28), were shown to be forged and worthless.

The shock of the fall of Constantinople was felt all through Christendom, and Nicolas attempted to start a crusade, but died before much came of it. When, however, the Turks, in the pride of victory, advanced farther into Europe, and laid siege to Belgrade on the Danube, they were driven back with great loss by the skill of John Huniades, a Hungarian general, and by the courage which John of Capistrano, a Franciscan friar, was able by his exhortations and his prayers to rouse in the hearts of the besieged (1456).

Nicolas died in 1455, and his successor, Calixtus III., in 1458. The next pope, Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini, who took the name of Pius II., was a very remarkable man. He had taken a strong part against Pope Eugenius at Basel, and had even been secretary to the old duke-antipope Felix. But he afterwards made his peace by performing great services for Eugenius, and then he rose step by step, until at the death of Calixtus he was elected pope. Pius was a man of very great ability in many ways; but his health was so much shaken before he became pope, that he was not able to do all that he might have done if he had been in the fulness of his strength. He took up the crusade with great zeal, but found no hearty support from others. A meeting which he held at Mantua for the purpose had little effect. At last, although suffering from gout and fever, the pope made his way from Rome to

Ancona, on the Adriatic, where he expected to find both land and sea forces ready for the crusade. But on the way he fell in with some of the troops which had been collected for the purpose, and they turned out to be such wretched creatures, and so utterly unfit for the hardships of war, that he could only give them his blessing and tell them to go back to their homes. And, although, after reaching Ancona, he had the pleasure of seeing twenty-four Venetian ships enter the harbour for his service, he was so worn out by sickness that he died on the next day but one (August 14, 1464). And after his death the crusade, on which he had so much set his heart, came to nothing.

CHAPTER XXVIII

JEROME SAVONAROLA

(A.D. 1452–1498)

Part I

There is not much to tell about the popes after Pius II. until we come to Alexander VI., who was a Spaniard named Roderick Borgia, and was pope from 1492 to 1503. And the story of Alexander is too horrible to be told here; for the accounts which we have of him and of his family are one of the blackest stains on the history of the papacy. He is supposed to have died of drinking, by mistake, some poison which he had prepared for a rich cardinal whose wealth he wished to get into his hands.

Instead, therefore, of dealing with the popes of this time, let us consider a man who became very famous as a preacher—Jerome Savonarola.

Savonarola was born in 1452 at Ferrara, where his grandfather had been physician to the duke; and his family wished him to follow the same profession. But

Jerome was set on entering a religious order, and from this nothing could move him. He therefore joined the Dominican friars, and after a while he was removed to St. Mark's, at Florence, a famous convent of his order. He found things in a bad state there; but he was chosen prior (or head) of the convent, and reformed it, so that it rose in character, and the number of the friars was much increased. He also became a great preacher, so that even the vast cathedral of Florence could not hold the crowds which flocked to hear him. He was especially fond of preaching on the dark prophecies of the Revelation, and of declaring that the judgments of God were about to come on Florence and on all Italy because of sin; and he sometimes thought that he not only gathered such things from Scripture, but that they were revealed to him by visions from heaven.

At this time a family named Medici had got the chief power in Florence into their hands; and Savonarola always opposed them, because he thought that they had no right to such power in a city which ought to be free. But when Lorenzo, the head of the family, was dying (A.D. 1492), he sent for Savonarola, because he thought him the only priest who would be likely to speak honestly to him of his sins and to show him the way of seeking forgiveness. Savonarola did his part firmly, and pointed out some of Lorenzo's acts as being those of which he was especially bound to repent. But when he desired him to restore the liberties of Florence, it was more than the dying man could make up his mind to do, and Savonarola, thinking that his repentance could not be sincere if he refused this, left him without giving him the Church's absolution.

But, although Savonarola was a very sincere and pious man, he did not always show good judgment. For instance, when he wished to get rid of the disorderly way in which the young people of Florence

used to behave at the beginning of Lent he sent a number of boys about the city (A.D. 1497), where they entered into houses and asked the inhabitants to give up to them any *vanities* which they might have. Then these vanities (as they were called) were all gathered together and were built up into a pile fifteen stories high. There were among them cards and dice, fineries of women's dress, looking-glasses, bad books, musical instruments, pictures, and statues. The whole heap was of great value, and a merchant from Venice offered a large sum for it. But the money was refused, and he was forced to throw in his own picture as an addition to the other vanities. When night came, a long procession under Savonarola's orders passed through the streets, and then the pile was set on fire, amidst the sound of bells, drums, and trumpets, and the shouts of the multitude, who had been worked up to a share of Savonarola's zeal.

But the wiser people were distressed by the mistakes of judgment which he had shown in setting children to search out the faults of their elders and in mixing up harmless things in the same destruction with those which were connected with deep sinfulness and vice. And this want of judgment was still more shown a year later, when, after having repeated the bonfire of vanities, Savonarola's followers danced wildly in three circles around a cross set up in front of St. Mark's, as if they had been so many crazy dervishes of the East.

Part II

Savonarola had raised up a host of enemies, and some of them were eagerly looking for an opportunity of doing him some mischief. At length one Francis of Apulia, a Franciscan friar, challenged him to what was called the *ordeal* (or judgment) of fire, as a trial of the truth of his doctrine, and after much trouble it was settled that a friend of each should pass

through this trial, which was supposed to be a way of finding out God's judgment as to the truth of the matter in dispute. Two great heaps of fuel were piled up in a public place at Florence. They were each forty yards long and two yards and a half high, with an opening of a yard's width between them, and it was intended that these heaps should be set on fire, and that the champions should try to pass between the two, as a famous monk had done at Florence in Hildebrand's time, hundreds of years before. But when a vast crowd had been brought to see the ordeal, they were much disappointed at finding that it was delayed, because Savonarola's enemies fancied that he might perhaps make use of some magical charms against the flames. There was a long dispute about this, and, while the parties were still wrangling, a heavy shower came down on the crowd. The magistrates then forbade the trial; the people, tired and hungry from waiting, drenched by the rain, provoked by the wearisome squabble which had caused the delay, and after all balked of the expected sight, broke out against Savonarola, and he had great difficulty in reaching St. Mark's under the protection of some friends, who closed around him and kept off the angry multitude. Two days later the convent was besieged, and when the defenders were obliged to surrender it, Savonarola and the friar who was to have undergone the ordeal on his side were sent to prison.

Savonarola had a long trial, during which he was often tortured; but whatever might be wrung from him in this way, he afterwards declared that it was not to be believed, because the weakness of his body could not bear the pain of torture, and he had confessed whatever might be asked of him. The trial was carried on under the authority of the wicked Pope Alexander VI.

Although no charge of error as to the faith could

be proved against Savonarola, his enemies were bent on his death, and he and two of his companions were sentenced to be hanged and burnt. Like Huss, they had to go through the form of being degraded from their Orders, and at the end of this it was a bishop's part to say to each: "I separate thee from the Church militant"—that is, from the Church which is carrying on its warfare here on earth. But the bishop, who had once been one of Savonarola's friars at St. Mark's, was very uneasy, and said in his confusion: "I separate thee from the Church triumphant"—that is, from the Church when its warfare has ended in victory and triumph. Savonarola saw the mistake, and corrected it by saying: "From the militant, not from the triumphant; for *that* is not thine to do."

Savonarola's party did not die out with him, but long continued to cherish his memory. Among those who were most earnest in this was the great artist, Michael Angelo Buonarotti, who had been one of his hearers in youth, and even to his latest days used to read his works with interest, and to speak of him with reverence.

CHAPTER XXIX

JULIUS II. AND LEO X.

(A.D. 1503–1521)

ALEXANDER VI. was succeeded by a pope who took the title of Pius III., and lived only six-and-twenty days after his election. And after Pius came Julius II., who was pope from 1503 to 1513, and then Leo X., who lived to the year 1521.

Julius, who owed his rise in life to the favour of his uncle Sixtus IV. (one of the popes who had come between Pius II. and Alexander VI.), was desirous to gain for the Roman see all that it had lost or had

ever claimed. He was not a man of religious character, but plunged deeply into politics, and even acted as a soldier in war. Thus, at the siege of Mirandola, in the winter of 1511, he lived for weeks in a little hut, regardless of the frost and snow, and of the roughness and scantiness of his food; and when most of those around him were frightened away by the cannon-balls which came from the walls of the fortress, the stout old pope kept his place and directed the pointing of his own cannon against the town.

His successor, Leo X., who was of the Florentine family of Medici (see II., 117), was fond of elegant pleasures and of hunting. His tastes were costly, and continually made him short of money. The manner of life in Leo's court was gay, luxurious, and far from strict. He had comedies acted before him, which were hardly fit for the amusement of the chief bishop of Christendom. He is famous for his encouragement of the arts, and it was in his time that the art of painting reached its highest perfection through the genius of Michael Angelo Buonarotti (see II., 120), and of Raphael Sanzio. In architecture a great change took place about this time. For some hundreds of years it had been usual to build in what is called the *Gothic* style, of which the chief mark is the use of pointed arches. Not that there was no change during all that time, for there are great differences between the earlier and the later kinds of Gothic, and these have since been so carefully studied that it is easy to tell from the look of a building the time at which every part of it was erected. But a little before the year 1500, the Gothic gave way to another style, and one of the greatest works ever done in this new style was the vast church of St. Peter at Rome. Nicolas V. had begun the work of rebuilding the ancient church, which had stood since the time of Constantine the Great (see II., 115). But now the old basilica (see I., 95) and

the beginning of a new church which Nicolas had made were swept away, and something far grander was designed. There were several architects who carried on the building of this great church, one after another, but the vast dome of St. Peter's, which rises into the air over the whole city, was the work of Michael Angelo, who was not only a painter, but an architect and a sculptor. It was by offering indulgences[1] as a reward for gifts towards the new St. Peter's that Julius raised the anger and disgust of the German reformer, Martin Luther. And thus it was the building of the most magnificent of Roman churches that led to the revolt which took away from the popes a great part of their spiritual dominion.

CHAPTER XXX

MISSIONS—THE INQUISITION

All through the times of which we have been reading missions to the heathen were carried on, especially in Asia, and, indeed, the heart of Asia seems to have been more open and better known to Europeans during one part of the Middle Ages than it has ever been since. But as those parts were so far off, and so hard to get at, it often happened that dishonest people, for their own purposes, brought to Europe wonderful tales of the conversion of Eastern nations, or of their readiness to be converted, which had no basis in fact. And sometimes the crafty Asiatic princes themselves made a pretence of willingness to receive the Gospel when all that they really wanted was to get some advantages of other kinds from the pope and the Christians of the West.

[1] That is, remission of the penalties which, according to the belief of that time, sinners, even though forgiven, would have to suffer after death in the fire of Purgatory, in order to make amends for ecclesiastical offences.

A great deal was heard in Europe of a person who was called Prester—that is to say, *presbyter* or *priest*—John. He was believed to live in the far East, and to be both a king and a Christian priest. And there really was at one time a line of Christian princes in Asia, between Lake Baikal and the northern border of China, whose capital was Karakorum; but in 1202 their kingdom was overthrown by the Tartar conqueror, Genghis Khan, although the belief in Prester John, which had always been mixed with a good deal of fable, continued long after to float in the minds of Western Christians.

The mendicant orders, which were founded in the time of Innocent III. (II., 65-68), took up the work of missions with great zeal, and some of the Franciscan missionaries especially, by undergoing martyrdom, gained great credit for their order in its early days. There were also travellers who made their way into the East from curiosity or some other reason, and brought home accounts of what they had seen. The most famous of these travellers was Marco Polo, a Venetian of a trading family, who lived many years in China, and found his way back to Europe by India and Ceylon. Some of these travellers report that they found the Nestorian (see I., 160) clergy enjoying great influence at the courts of Asiatic sovereigns, for the Nestorians had been very active in missions at an earlier time, and had made many converts in Asia; but the travellers, who saw them only after they had been long settled there, describe them very unfavourably. John of Monte Corvino, an Italian, was established by Pope Clement V. as archbishop of Cambalu (or Pekin), with seven bishops under him (A.D. 1307). But the mission was too far from its base to be permanent.

In the meantime the people of countries bordering on the Baltic Sea were converted, although not without much trouble. Sometimes they would profess to

welcome the Gospel, but as soon as the preachers had left them they disowned it and washed themselves, as if by doing so they might get rid of their Christian baptism. And the missionaries often found themselves at a loss how to deal with the ignorant superstition of these people. Thus a missionary in Livonia, named Dietrich, was threatened with death because an eclipse had taken place during his visit to their country, and they fancied that he had swallowed the sun! At another time his life was in danger because the natives saw that his fields were in better condition than theirs, and, instead of understanding that this was the effect of his greater skill and care, they charged him with having brought it about by magical arts. They therefore resolved to settle his fate by bringing forward a horse which was regarded as sacred to their gods, and observing how the beast behaved. At first the horse put forward his right foot, which would have saved the missionary's life, but the heathen diviners said that the God of Christians was sitting on the horse's back and directing him, and they insisted that the back should be rubbed in order to get rid of such influence. But after this had been done the horse again put forward the same foot, and, much against the will of the Livonians, Dietrich was allowed to go free.

Sometimes the missionaries tried other things to help the effect of their preaching. Thus, a later missionary in Livonia, Albert of Apeldern, in order to give the people some knowledge of Scripture history, arranged what was called a prophetical play, in which Gideon, David, and Herod were to appear. But when Gideon and his men began to fight the Midianites on the stage, the heathens took alarm lest some treacherous trick should be practised on them, and they all ran away in affright.

Albert of Apeldern founded a military order, somewhat on the plan of the Templars, for the conversion

of the heathen on the Baltic, and it was afterwards joined with another order. The Teutonic (or German) order, which was thus formed, became very famous. After subduing the tribes on the Baltic coasts, it forced them to receive Christianity, took possession of their lands, and laid the foundation of a power which grew by degrees into the great Prussian kingdom.

The work of missions was carried on also in Russia, Lithuania, and other northern countries, so that by the time which we have now reached it might be said that all Europe was in some way or other converted to profess the Gospel. At the other end of Europe the Spaniards had long been pushing the Moslems back. In 1492 the last of the Moslem kingdoms, Granada, was conquered, and Spain, which had been partly Moslem for about 800 years, was once again entirely under Christian rule.

About the end of the fifteenth century the discoveries of the Portuguese in Africa and the East, and those of the Spaniards in the great Western continent, opened new fields for missionary labour, but of this we need not now speak more particularly.

Unhappily, the Church was not content with trying to convince people of the truth of its doctrine by gentle means, but disgraced itself by persecution. We have already noticed the horrible wars against the Albigenses in the south of France (see II., 65), and cruel persecutions were carried on in Spain against Jews, Moslems, and persons suspected of heresy. The conduct of these persecutions was in the hands of the Inquisition, a special court under the control of the King of Spain, which did its work without any regard to the rules of justice, and was made more terrible by the darkness and mystery of its proceedings. It kept spies to pry into all men's concerns and to give secret information against them; even the nearest relatives were not safe from each

other under this dreadful system. Multitudes were put to death, and others were glad to escape with such punishments as entire loss of their property, or imprisonment, which was in many cases for life.

In the course of all these hundreds of years, the Christian religion had been much corrupted from its first purity. The power of the clergy over the ignorant people had become far greater than it ought to have been, and too commonly it was kept up by the encouragement of superstitions and abuses. The popes claimed supreme power on earth. They claimed the right of setting up and plucking down emperors and kings. They interfered with appointments to sees, parishes, and all the offices of the Church throughout all Western Europe. They wished to make it appear as if bishops had no authority except what they held through the grant of the pope. There were general complaints against the faults of the clergy, and among the mass of men religion had become in great part little better than an affair of forms. From all quarters arose the demand for "reform of the Church in head and members," but all efforts to reform the Church from within had failed. The result was a revolution, which broke up the religious unity of Europe and brought into the world a new kind of Christianity, which was supposed to be a restoration of the religion of the New Testament, but was in reality different from anything that had ever been known before. At the same time, by the providence of God, England was set free from the power of the popes, and the doctrine of its church was brought back to an agreement with Holy Scripture and with the Christianity of early times.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY
BILLING AND SONS, LTD., GUILDFORD AND ESHER

86121

270S
R547
v. 1

Robertson, J
AUTHOR
Sketches of church history
TITLE

DATE LOANED	BORROWER'S NAME	DATE RETURNED
10/20/72	Pfaff	JAN 4 73

270 S 86121
R547
v. 1